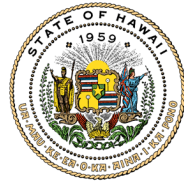


**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026  
10:32 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2208, HD1, SD1  
RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee:

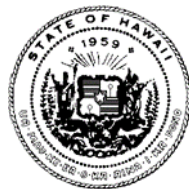
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2208, HD1, SD1 that establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State. Requires reports to the Legislature.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports this measure that acknowledges the great need of a majority of Hawaii families to secure consistent food access and provides nourishment to these families through a grant program that engages food banks, already familiar with the intake, distribution and administration of the processes of providing food to families.

This measure provides relief to the stresses to food access caused by every natural disaster, each global incident, every supply chain disruption, and creates a path for food banks that have been severely under resourced to assist Hawaii families with the growing need for food.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE  
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

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

April 4, 2026

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

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2208 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.**

Hearing: April 6, 2026, 10:32 a.m.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol and Videoconference

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and the SD1 amendments extending the effective date of this proposed program to July 1, 2028, and provides comments. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program under DHS to alleviate food shortages in the State. DHS respectfully requests that the appropriation not replace or reduce budget priorities identified in the executive budget.

For the committee's information, DHS requires an extended effective date as the Department's focus is on implementing programmatic changes required by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), Public Law 119-21. The Department does not currently have sufficient administrative capacity and resources to initiate and oversee a new program.

Notably, OBBBA authorized a new cost-share model for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits tied to payment error rates (PER). Currently, the SNAP benefit is 100% federally funded and the OBBBA cost-share will require states to pay a percentage of the SNAP benefit based on the PER. Specifically, OBBBA requires states with a

PER of 6% or higher (based on the PER from either federal fiscal year 2025 or 2026 (states choose which year's error rate to use as the baseline)), to fund a percentage of total SNAP benefits with state funds.

Hawaii currently issues roughly \$660 million in SNAP benefits annually. Using this annual amount as an estimate, the projected percentage tiering for Hawaii would be the following:

**Table 1. Cost Share for SNAP Benefits by payment error rate, beginning federal fiscal year 2028.**

| Payment Error Rate | Cost Share for SNAP Benefits   |   |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|
|                    | % of State Cost Share for SNAP | Est. Annual Amount to be paid by Hawaii |
| <6%                | 0%                             | \$0                                     |
| 6-7.99%            | 5%                             | \$33,000,000                            |
| 8-9.99%            | 10%                            | \$66,000,000                            |
| 10% or above       | 15%                            | \$99,000,000                            |

Hawaii's most recent PER for federal fiscal year 2024 is 6.68%. DHS achieved this by streamlining and solidifying certain processes, thereby stabilizing the overall eligibility process. While we work to lower the PER, some of the OBBBA changes took effect on the date of the Act's signing on July 4, 2025, providing no time to adjust. Consequently we anticipate payment errors. As the chart indicates, the financial impact to the State could be significant, and the priority of DHS is to lower our PER.

The Department recognizes that residents, including those who receive SNAP benefits, also rely on community organizations for food and other assistance to meet nutritional and other needs not met by government programs. In the past, and most recently, to address the impacts of the 2025 federal government shutdown, DHS provided funds to the Hawaii Foodbank and its network to purchase and distribute food. DHS has also facilitated grants appropriated under Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to community food bank organizations.

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

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:26:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                                      | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Michele McLean      | Testifying for Maui<br>County Council Chair<br>Alice Lee | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

As a former member of the Board of the Maui Food Bank, I ask for your support of this important measure. With our housing crisis being foremost in everyone's minds, we cannot fail to also address our food security crisis -- which includes 34 percent of our keiki experiencing food insecurity!

HB2208, HD1, SD1 -- the Farm to Families Bill -- is a win-win-win-win: it provides access to fresh food for food insecure families; it invests in local farmers and growers; it strengthens our community food systems; and it improves our health and resiliency.

- If we invest in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods and thus create more resilient and sustainable food systems.

- If we provide a steady market for local produce, then farmers can plan for future growth.

- If we provide healthy food options, we provide essential nutrients to individuals, thus fighting hunger and promoting long-term health and wellness.

Please give HB2208, HD1, SD1 your whole-hearted support!

Mahalo for your consideration.

Michele McLean

Office of Maui County Council Chair Alice Lee and former Board Member of the Maui Food Bank



## HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS  
Chair

*John A. Burns School of Medicine,  
Department of Pediatrics*

Jennifer José Lo, MD  
Vice Chair

*Hawai'i Health Partners*

Titimaea Ta'ase, JD  
Secretary

*Taase Law Office*

Jonathan Ching  
Kaiser Permanente

Tammy Ho  
*The Queen's Medical Center*

Carissa Holley, MEd  
*Hale Makua Health Services*

Joyce Lee-Ibarra, MS  
*JLI Consulting*

Misty Pacheco, DrPH  
*University of Hawai'i at Hilo*

Dina Shek, JD  
*Medical-Legal Partnership  
For Children in Hawai'i*

JoAnn Tsark, MPH  
*John A. Burns School of Medicine, Native  
Hawaiian Research Office*

Danette Wong Tomiyasu, MBA  
*Retired, Hawai'i State Department of  
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: April 1, 2026

To: Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Support for HB 2208 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Security

Hrg: April 6, 2026, at 10:32 AM, Conference Room 211

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)<sup>1</sup> and the Healthy Eating + Active Living<sup>2</sup> (HEAL) Statewide Coalition are in **support of HB 2208 HD1 SD1**, which establishes and funds the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to help alleviate food shortages across our islands. This bill would strengthen Hawai'i's emergency food network, while supporting local farmers and producers, ensuring families have greater access to fresh, nutritious, locally grown food.

### Hunger is the Norm

Hawai'i is facing a severe food insecurity crisis. Nearly one in three households in our state struggles with food insecurity, affecting working families, kūpuna, and keiki alike. This has resulted in more than 150,000 people relying on the food bank system every month for assistance. With Hawai'i's high cost of living and heavy reliance on imported food, access to affordable, nutritious food remains out of reach for too many residents.

The growing demand for food assistance is clear. The Hawai'i Food Bank network has increased food distribution from 12.5 million pounds in 2018 to 21.2 million pounds in 2024, a 70 percent increase in just six years.<sup>34</sup> This dramatic rise reflects the growing number of families struggling to put food on the table and underscores the urgency of strengthening food assistance infrastructure statewide.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> [Hawai'i Food Bank Annual Report - 2018.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Hawai'i Food Bank Annual Report - 2024.](#)



### **Helping Those in Need**

The Farm to Families Program is a proven solution that directly addresses hunger while supporting Hawai'i's agricultural economy. By purchasing food from local farmers and producers, the program provides fresh fruits, vegetables, and culturally important foods such as 'uala, 'ulu, and poi to families in need. This approach not only improves nutrition and public health, but also keeps food dollars circulating within Hawai'i's local economy.

### **Local Food is Needed**

Fresh produce is in especially high demand across food banks and pantries. Many distribution sites report long lines when fresh food is available, yet supply remains limited due to funding and distribution challenges.<sup>5</sup> Expanding the Farm to Families Program would help create reliable access to locally grown produce, while strengthening food supply chains.

Last year, legislators appropriated \$500,000 for the farm-to-families program in the state budget. However, more investment is needed to fortify food access for vulnerable families. Providing families with access to adequate nutrition helps improve educational outcomes, workforce participation, and long-term health, reducing downstream costs tied to food insecurity.

This proposal represents a smart investment in Hawai'i's people. By strengthening our emergency food network and supporting local food production, this bill moves our state closer to a more sustainable and resilient future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Hix".

Nate Hix  
Director of Policy and Advocacy

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<sup>5</sup> KHON. 12-2-24. [“A guide to what Hawai'i's food banks need this season”](https://www.khon2.com/local-news/a-guide-to-what-hawaii%CA%BBis-food-banks-need-this-season/)  
<https://www.khon2.com/local-news/a-guide-to-what-hawaii%CA%BBis-food-banks-need-this-season/>



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

### SUPPORT HB 2208 HD1 SD1: RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i  
Hearing: Monday, April 6, 2026; 10:32 AM; CR 211 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members, Committee on Ways and Means:

My name is Betty Lou Larson from Catholic Charities Hawai'i. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. We are in **strong support of HB 2208 HD1 SD1**, which establishes and funds grants for the Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in the State.

With one in three households in Hawai'i experiencing food insecurity, including 34 percent of children, decisive action is needed to ensure families have consistent access to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food. HB 2208 HD1 represents a meaningful and practical solution to this urgent challenge.

This measure creates a win-win opportunity for Hawai'i by simultaneously addressing hunger and strengthening our local food system. By supporting partnerships between local farmers and food organizations, the bill expands access to fresh, healthy food for food-insecure families while investing in Hawai'i's agricultural community.

Specifically, HB 2208 HD1 SD1 will:

- **Strengthen Hawai'i's food supply chain** by increasing local food production and reducing reliance on imported goods, helping to build a more resilient and sustainable food system.
- **Support local farmers and growers** by providing a reliable and fair market for locally grown produce, enabling farmers to plan for growth and stability while feeding their neighbors in need.
- **Enhance nutritional access and health outcomes** by increasing the availability of fresh, local produce for families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options—addressing both immediate hunger and long-term wellness.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i works daily with families struggling to make ends meet. We see firsthand how access to fresh, nutritious food can stabilize households, improve health, and strengthen communities. This measure aligns with these goals and reflects a thoughtful investment in both people and local agriculture.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to pass this important bill. If you have any questions, please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson, at (808) 527-4813.





April 1, 2026

To: Chair Donovan Delacruz and Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Subject: **HB2208 SD1**, Relating to Food Security

Aloha,

I am writing in **support of HB2208 SD1** which establishes and grants funds for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in Hawaii. Hawaii's high cost of living (both housing costs and food) and reliance on food shipped from out of state have left as many as one-third of the population food insecure. Furthermore, the limited amount of fresh, local food leaves many of the population reliant on ultraprocessed food which is increasingly shown to be deleterious to health. The extended difficulty of food acquisition during the pandemic and the more recent federal government shutdown have demonstrated the precarious nature of fresh local food availability. This bill would strengthen the connection between local farmers and community food systems, and furthermore, encourage the continued expansion of locally-grown fresh food. By funding the purchase of locally grown food for the food banks within Hawai'i, both the residents of Hawai'i and the local farmers would be able to benefit from this support.

**I urge this committee to pass HB2208 SD1** which establishes and grants funds for the Farm to Families program which would provide fresh, locally grown foods to Hawai'i food banks. Support to local farmers AND Hawaii's families goes a long way to alleviating food insecurity and hunger in the Hawaiian Islands. This bill and its amendments would also continue to provide encouragement to the local farming sector to grow and reduce the reliance of Hawai'i on Mainland food.

Mahalo,

Carlin Rose McFaddin & the Food+ Policy Team

#fixourfoodsystem

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**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 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food 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.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 2:49:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By     | Organization         | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jeannette Gurung | Testifying for WOCAN | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Hawai'i Legislators,

As a new farming family on the Big Island, that is using our land to grow crops to add to the food security resources for this island, we are extremely interested to see this bill supported to provide assistance to **establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in the State.**

-- One in three households in Hawai'i faces food insecurity, and our most vulnerable populations need our support. I strongly support this critical bill that will establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai'i farm to families program to fund food banks to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawai'i-grown or -produced food. This program ensures fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity, and helps alleviate hunger in our state.

-- Many families in Hawai'i struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is an important step toward reducing hunger in our islands. Moreover, efforts to invest in local agriculture and support our farmers builds Hawai'i's climate resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a triple win for our families, our farmers, and our climate!

Mahalo, Jeannette Gurung

Kailua Kona, 96740



## 'Ahahui o nā Kauka

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 1015

Honolulu HI 96813

Phone 808.548.0270

E-mail [huikauka@gmail.com](mailto:huikauka@gmail.com)

### 2025-2026 Advocacy Committee

Marcus Kāwika Iwane, MD  
President

Kapono Chong-Hanssen, MD  
Vice-President & Advocacy Co-Chair

Kaohimanu Dang-Akiona, MD  
Advocacy Co-Chair

Kara Wong Ramsey, MD  
Treasurer

Kapua Medeiros, MD

Natalie Young-Albanese, MD

Jordan Lee, MD

April 2, 2026

### COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

### Group Testimony in Support of HB2208HD1SD1 RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Aloha,

'Ahahui o nā Kauka is an organization of Native Hawaiian physicians dedicated to the health of the people of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiians in particular. We are writing in support of HB2208 Farm to Families aimed to alleviate food shortages in the State of Hawai'i. With 1 in 3 households in Hawai'i facing food insecurity, including 34% of all children, it is critical that we take action to ensure that everyone in our community has access to safe and healthy food. This bill is a win-win. It will provide critical access to fresh, culturally relevant foods for food insecure families, while also investing in local farmers and growers, who are critical to strengthening our community food systems and creating a healthier, more resilient Hawai'i.

The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:

1. **Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain:** By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.
2. **Supporting Local Farmers:** The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.
3. **Enhancing Nutritional Access:** Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.

We know that food insecurity and access to healthy and culturally relevant foods is a fundamental determinant of health that impacts overall Maui Ola (health and wellness). Today, Hawai'i relies on external markets and imports 85-90% of food, and thus Hawai'i's people are no longer connected to food sources, how it's processed or know where the food comes from. We also know that people who face challenges accessing enough food also face challenges affording adequate housing, healthcare, transportation and other basic needs. Studies show that among those experiencing food insecurity, over 60% described either delaying filling prescriptions or taking less medicine in order to save money.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. We are deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:10:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>              | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Christopher Dean    | Testifying for Clean the Pacific | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

We support this legislation. As you know, we live thousands of miles from any other landmass. In this tumultuous time, it's more important than ever that we transition away from relying on other people to feed us. This bill will not only help provide locally grown food, but also teach a new generation on how to grow our own food here in Hawaii. We know you understand the gravity of this situation and appreciate all the hard work that you're doing for the state of Hawaii. Mahalo.



**Maui Food Bank**  
Nourishing Lives. Feeding Futures

April 6, 2026

**RE: Support for HB 2208 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Security**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Maui Food Bank, I express our **strong support for HB 2208 HD1 Relating to Food Security** which establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State.

For over 30 years, Maui Food Bank has provided daily and emergency assistance to those facing food insecurity in Maui County. Maui Food Bank distributes food to families and individuals on Maui, Molokai and Lanai through direct service programs and through our network of **148 agency partners**. Last fiscal year, we served on average 40,000 people each month, distributing a total of **7.6 million pounds** of nutritious food, including **2.9 million pounds of fresh produce**. Of those served, 35% are children and youth.

With 1 in 3 households in the entire State of Hawai'i facing food insecurity, including 34% of all children, it is critical that we take action to ensure that everyone in our community has access to safe and healthy food. This bill is a win-win. It will provide critical access to fresh, culturally relevant foods for food insecure families, while also investing in local farmers and growers, who are critical to strengthening our community food systems and creating a healthier, more resilient Hawai'i.

The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:

- 1. Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain:** By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.
- 2. Supporting Local Farmers:** The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.
- 3. Enhancing Nutritional Access:** Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options.



**Maui Food Bank**  
Nourishing Lives, Feeding Futures

This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.

As an example, in FY25 the Maui Food Bank:

- Purchased 650,000 pounds of locally grown/produced food from 29 farmers/ranchers
- Generated \$1.1 million in revenue for local food producers and \$3.5 million for other Maui County food industry businesses.
- Collected 2.6 million pounds of surplus food from 78 business donors

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. I am deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation. HB 2208 HD1 SD1 empowers food distribution organizations to forge stronger partnerships with local farmers and food producers, ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce reaches families experiencing food insecurity. These collaborations between local farms and food organizations deliver benefits to both our communities and the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Lisa H. Paulson  
CEO, Maui Food Bank

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 7:46:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>           | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Steve Ulene         | Testifying for Maui Food Bank | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**My name is Steve Ulene, and I currently serve as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Maui Food Bank, an organization dedicated to alleviating hunger and ensuring that no one in our community goes without nutritious food. Every month, the Maui Food Bank provides critical food assistance to thousands of individuals and families, including seniors, children, and those experiencing economic hardship.**

**I am writing with an urgent request for your support of the "Farm to Families" bill, a pivotal piece of legislation that has the potential to transform our state's food security landscape. This bill will allow food distributing organizations to strengthen their partnerships with local farmers and food producers, ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity.**

**The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:**

- 1. Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain: By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.**
- 2. Supporting Local Farmers: The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.**
- 3. Enhancing Nutritional Access: Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.**

**Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. I am deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.**

**Sincerely,**

**Steve Ulene  
Vice Chairman of the Board, Maui Food Bank**

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:44:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                              | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| laurel brier        | Testifying for Kauai<br>Climate Action Coalition | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

**Reduce hunger in Hawaii! HB2208 invests in local agriculture and supportsour farmers builds Hawai'i's climate resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a triple win for our families, our farmers, and our climate!**



Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association  
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council  
Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation  
Hawai'i Farmers' Union United  
Hawai'i Food Industry Association  
Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association  
Kohala Center  
Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i  
Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)  
Ulupono Initiative

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Monday, April 6, 2026 – 10:32 a.m.  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

**HB 2208 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY**  
**SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Local Food Coalition **SUPPORTS** HB 2208 HD1 SD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State.

Food security should be a top priority for the state. With uncertainty in the flow of federal funding, we have an obligation and an opportunity to further bridge Hawai'i agricultural producers' fresh, locally grown food to families in need.

HB 2208 HD1 SD1 will help stabilize demand for local products, provide farmers and ranchers with a reliable market, and reduce the State's dependence on imported food by investing directly in our communities. By leveraging existing food banks and community partners, this program can move local, Hawaii-grown or Hawaii-produced food to households that are struggling with the high cost of living, ensuring that public dollars support both local agriculture and vulnerable residents.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprised of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Monday, April 6, 2026 — 10:32 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 2208 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Security**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Vice President 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 HB 2208 HD1 SD1**, which establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages 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.

In response to the COVID pandemic, federal monies injected into Hawai'i through county initiatives helped grow a local farm-to-food bank effort, in which food banks were able to purchase local products for distribution to communities in need. 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.

These 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 regularly organize food drives to sustain these vital community resources, which depend increasingly on donations and local producers for consistent supply. Meeting these food security challenges will require ongoing support, and strengthening partnerships between farms and food banks is a valuable investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Vice President of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



Date: April 6, 2026

Subject: Hawai'i Foodbank in Strong Support of HB 2208 HD1 SD1 Relating to Food Security

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I express our STRONG support for HB 2208 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Security. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State. It also requires reports to the Legislature before the Regular Sessions of 2027 and 2028.

Hawai'i Foodbank has been committed to ensuring no one in Hawai'i goes hungry since 1983. We work with over 250 hunger relief partners on O'ahu and Kaua'i to distribute food, and programs like Food 4 Keiki and 'Ohana Produce Plus provide nutritious meals to children and families. In addition to addressing daily needs, our organization mobilizes during emergencies to provide immediate relief and aid long-term recovery efforts.

Hawai'i Foodbank's Farm to Families program provides fresh, healthy food to those in need while also supporting local farmers and producers. Launched in 2020, it has already demonstrated its impact by investing \$13 million into more than 40 local farms and food hubs, distributing over 10.5 million pounds of Hawai'i-grown produce and proteins. HB 2208 will expand this initiative by strengthening the supply chain, ensuring fresh, Hawai'i-grown food reaches food-insecure households while supporting local agriculture.

Increased funding for Farm to Families is critically needed. The "State of Food Insecurity in Hawai'i 2024-2025" report revealed that 32% of households in our state experience food insecurity. Thirty-four percent (34%) of children experience food insecurity, up from 29% in 2023; and in households with children food security among adults was a staggering 45%, up from 38% in 2023. These figures highlight the urgent need for a sustainable solution to hunger in Hawai'i.

Hawai'i Foodbank is currently serving more than 160,000 people a month – as many people as during the height of the pandemic and twice as many people as we served prior. Given recent federal cuts and the increasing frequency of federal government shutdowns and natural disasters, these numbers will only go up.

The Kona Low storms destroyed crops and disrupted harvest cycles across the state, making it more important than ever to invest in our farmers and strengthen our food system. With HB2208, every dollar does double duty, supporting our agricultural producers and ensuring our communities have access to safe, healthy, locally grown foods at the same time.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this vital measure and for your dedication to supporting our communities through initiatives like HB 2208 HD1 SD1.

With aloha,

Amy Miller  
President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Re: **HB2208 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Food Security**  
Hawai'i State Capitol & Via Videoconference  
April 6, 2026, 10:32 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB2208 HD1 SD1**. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in the State and requires reports to the Legislature prior to the Regular Sessions of 2027 and 2028.

According to the Hawai'i Food Bank, one third (34%) of children in Hawai'i are living in households in which one or more of them are food insecure.<sup>1</sup> Especially with the highest cost of living and most expensive groceries in the nation,<sup>2</sup> it is nearly impossible for the low-income families in Hawai'i to afford to buy healthy food, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

In addition, 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 and farmers by providing state funds to Hawai'i food banks to secure consistent supplies of locally produced or grown food for hungry families.

Food banks and their partner agencies help ensure that struggling families with keiki do not go hungry by distributing millions of pounds of food per year to those in need in our state. The recent years of high inflation, especially for groceries, the devastating wildfires, and federal layoffs and cuts have led our state's food banks to struggle with continual rising demand.<sup>4</sup>

This program would have the added plus of supporting our local farms. Farm to families is a win-win, by providing local food to those who need it, supporting local farmers, and strengthening local food systems.

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://hawaiifoodbank.org/food-insecurity/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://meric.mo.gov/data/cost-living-data-series>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/children-families>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/10/hawaii-food-banks-and-farmers-are-in-real-trouble-with-federal-cuts>

**Testimony in Support of HB 2208  
Relating to Farm to Families**

**April 3, 2026**

**My name is Joe Chee, and I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Maui Food Bank, an organization dedicated to alleviating hunger and ensuring that no one in our community goes without nutritious food. Every month, the Maui Food Bank provides critical food assistance to thousands of individuals and families, including seniors, children, and those experiencing economic hardship.**

**I am writing with an urgent request for your support of the "Farm to Families" bill, a pivotal piece of legislation that has the potential to transform our state's food security landscape. This bill will allow food distributing organizations to strengthen their partnerships with local farmers and food producers, ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity.**

**The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:**

- 1. Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain: By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.**
- 2. Supporting Local Farmers: The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.**
- 3. Enhancing Nutritional Access: Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.**

**Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. I am deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.**

**Sincerely,**

**Joe Chee  
Kahului  
Board Member, Maui Food Bank**



PO Box 474  
Haleiwa HI, 96712  
808-228-8865  
info@lokoeafarms.com  
www.lokoeafarms.com

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February 5, 2026

Aloha! My name is Noe Neumann and I am the owner/operator at Lokoea Farms. We are a second generation family farm in Haleiwa and we grow citrus and tropical fruit for local consumption.

My family and I are writing to support the "Farm to Families" bill, a critical piece of legislation that will help secure a consistent market for local food producers, strengthening our community food systems and ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity.

As a small family farm, we rely on the Hawaii Food Bank every year during our heaviest harvest season for our Haleiwa Gold Hawaiian Oranges. We sell oranges and other tropical fruit throughout the year through other channels such as Farm Link Hawaii, but during the fall/winter months we have a huge amount of oranges that our normal buyers can't handle. The Hawaii Food Bank has been stepping in every year since 2020 to purchase and distribute these delicious locally grown oranges to local families.

The partnership between our local farm and food organizations such as the Food Bank benefits families in our communities and our economy by:

1. **Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain:** By investing in our small family farm, the Food Bank helps reduce Hawaii's dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.
2. **Supporting Local Farmers:** The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, which will help the Food Bank continue providing a steady and fair market for our local oranges. Knowing that we have a market for our larger harvests allows us to plan for future growth knowing our fruit will feed our neighbors in need.
3. **Enhancing Nutritional Access:** Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities. You can't get better oranges than our fresh, juicy, sweet Haleiwa Gold Hawaiian Oranges!

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. I am deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation and stand ready to collaborate with you in any way that may be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Noe Neumann". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a distinct loop for the 'G' and a long, sweeping tail for the 'M'.

G. Noe Neumann  
808-228-8865  
[info@lokoeafarms.com](mailto:info@lokoeafarms.com)

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:33:23 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>   | <b>Organization</b>                   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Susan B Roberts Emery | Testifying for Green Party of Hawai'i | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Honorable Members of Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, and on behalf of all of our members, we are proud to be in Very Strong Support of HB2208 HD1 SD1.

We strongly support this critical bill that will establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai'i farm to families program to fund food banks to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawai'i-grown or -produced food. This program ensures fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity, and helps alleviate hunger in our state. As a farm worker myself I see the impact that our local organic farm has on our community.

Moreover, efforts to invest in local agriculture and support our farmers builds Hawai'i's climate resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. Keep it local, keep it fresh!

Green Party of Hawai'i urges you to Pass HB2208 HD1 SD1. A win-win for all of us.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo



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)

April 6, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2208, HD1, SD1**  
RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:32 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwake, 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 HB 2208, HD1, SD1**, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State while supporting local agricultural producers.

Hawai'i continues to face persistent food insecurity challenges, with many families lacking consistent access to fresh, nutritious food. At the same time, local farmers and ranchers often struggle with unpredictable markets, high distribution costs, and limited access to stable buyers. The Farm to Families Program addresses both challenges by connecting locally grown food with community feeding programs and households in need.

Since 2020, HFB has partnered with Hawai'i's food banks to help source fresh, locally grown food for community distribution. Through these partnerships, the Hawai'i Foodbank, Maui Food Bank, Kaua'i Foodbank, and the Hawai'i Island Food Basket work with hundreds of agency partners statewide to distribute safe, nutritious food to food-insecure individuals and families. These collaborations have demonstrated that purchasing local agricultural products strengthens food access while supporting Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers.

HB 2208, HD1, SD1 builds on this proven model by providing a structured, state-supported program that creates a reliable market for local producers while improving access to fresh, locally sourced food for vulnerable populations. Investing in local agriculture through programs like Farm to Families helps reduce reliance on imports,

strengthens Hawai'i's food system resilience, and ensures that public resources support both community well-being and local economic activity.

We appreciate the placement of this program within the Department of Human Services, recognizing food security as both a human services and agricultural issue. By aligning social support programs with local food production, HB 2208, HD1, SD1 represents a practical, collaborative approach to addressing hunger in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |  
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**Executive Officers**

**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*  
**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*  
**Jill Tamura**, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*  
**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*  
**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Advisor*  
**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Ways and Means  
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April 6, 2026

TIME: 10:32am

RE: HB2208 HD1 SD1 Relating to Food Security

Position: Support

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 support of this measure. Injecting state funding into our local food systems has a range of benefits. First and foremost this measure helps address the growing issue of food insecurity in our state. Far too many Hawaii families are facing food insecurity and they need your support. This measure will help provide healthy fresh food to families who utilize foodbanks in our state.

This measure also provides a consistent buyer to support our local agricultural producers. Having consistent buyers encourages growth in our local agricultural sector and helps make locally grown food more accessible and competitive for us all. This helps diversify our economy, creates agricultural jobs, and ensures that there is more local food for everyone to enjoy. This measure is good for families who will utilize it, it's good for our local farmers, it's good for our food systems, and good for Hawaii.

We believe that in order to improve food security, local food production, and resiliency in Hawaii it's vital for the State to support programs like this which support our food industry. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.



To: The Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Monday, April 6, 2026, 10:32am

**In strong support of HB2208 HD1 SD1**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and WAM Committee members;

I am Co-Founder of the Hawai'i chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of HB2208 HD1 SD1** that establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State.

One in three households in Hawai'i faces food insecurity, and our most vulnerable populations need our support. This critical measure will establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to fund food banks to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawai'i-grown or -produced food. By doing so, this program ensures fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity, and helps alleviate hunger.

Many families in Hawai'i struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is an important step toward reducing hunger in our islands. Moreover, efforts to invest in local agriculture and support our farmers builds Hawai'i's resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a triple win for our families, our farmers, and our climate!

Please pass HB2208 HD1 SD1 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



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Monday, April 6, 2025; 10:32 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conf. Room 211  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2208, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 House Bill No. 2208, House Draft 1, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

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 measure, as received by your Committee, would establish the Hawaii Farm to Families Program (Program) on July 1, 2028, to fund food banks in the State to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawaii-grown or -produced food to food insecure communities. In addition, the bill would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2026-2027, for the administration of the Program and provision of food to Food Banks through the Program.

The bill would take effect upon its approval.

The HPCA acknowledges that pursuant to Act 213, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, the Hawaii State Legislature established a five-year Food Hub Pilot Program to provide eligible applicants with financial assistance to establish and expand food hub operations on a scale to meet local demands. The Legislature further found that additional funding was necessary to facilitate the intended goals of the Food Hub Pilot Program by enacting Act 185, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, to appropriate \$1,500,000 in general funds for fiscal 2025-2026 and the same amount for fiscal year 2026-2027.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 2208, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1**  
**Monday, April 6, 2025; 10:32 a.m.**  
**Page 2**

The HPCA has supported the Food Hub Pilot Program since its creation in 2022 and had also supported the provision of additional funding for that program in 2025.

In November 2025, the federal government shutdown stopped the provision of SNAP benefits to Hawaii's citizens. This placed an enormous strain on Hawaii's social safety net to prevent catastrophic outcomes for our most vulnerable communities. This crisis demonstrated how fragile Hawaii's food distribution system is and that the need for additional mechanisms to support nonprofit organizations throughout the State is prevalent and acute.

To the extent that the program proposed by this bill will provide additional resources to nonprofit organizations such as the Food Bank, the HPCA wholeheartedly supports this measure. However, we also note that the manner in which State resources are provided to nonprofits must be carefully examined.

We note that for measures seeking to appropriate funds to non-governmental agencies, the Attorney General had opined that such efforts may conflict with Article VII, Section 4 of the Hawaii Constitution. (**See**, House Bill No. 1468, Regular Session of 2019, among others.). We acknowledge that the authority to issue grants is solely that of the Legislative branch so how state funds are distributed to food banks must comply with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, among others.

**Be that as it may, we urge your favorable consideration of this measure to further discussion.**

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](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).



April 2, 2026

## **Testimony in Support of H.B.2208 HD1 SD1 Relating to Food Security**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

Aloha United Way strongly supports H.B. 2208 H.D.1, which establishes the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to support food banks in purchasing, storing, and distributing fresh, Hawai'i-grown food to food-insecure households.

Food security is a fundamental part of financial stability. According to Aloha United Way's ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) research, approximately 40%<sup>1</sup> of Hawai'i households struggle to afford the basic cost of living. As a result, many families must make difficult trade-offs between food and other essential expenses such as housing, transportation, and healthcare. When household budgets are strained, nutritious foods like fresh produce are often among the first items families are forced to reduce.

The need is urgent. Across Hawai'i, one in three households struggles to consistently access food, and many families are forced to skip meals or reduce intake. This burden falls disproportionately on households with children, where food insecurity rates are even higher, impacting both immediate well-being and long-term health outcomes.

This measure supports both families and local agriculture by strengthening connections between Hawai'i's food banks and local farmers. Hawai'i's food banks already partner with hundreds of local farms and distribute tens of millions of meals across the state, demonstrating both the scale of need and the effectiveness of these partnerships. Investing in Hawai'i-grown food helps improve access to nutritious options for households facing food insecurity while also creating reliable markets for local agricultural producers.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.auw.org/about/alice-initiative/alice-reports/>



Keeping food dollars circulating within the local economy strengthens both community resilience and the State's long-term food security. As the cost of imported food continues to rise, expanding local food production and distribution is not only beneficial but necessary to ensure Hawai'i's sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Food banks and community partners play a critical role in Hawai'i's safety net, helping families meet basic needs during periods of financial hardship. Supporting these efforts with a consistent supply of locally grown food will help ensure that vulnerable households have reliable access to healthy options.

H.B. 2208 HD1 SD1 represents a thoughtful and strategic investment that supports families experiencing food insecurity while strengthening Hawai'i's local food system and economic resilience.

We respectfully urge you to support H.B. 2208 HD1 SD1. Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,

Michelle Bartell  
President & CEO  
Aloha United Way



PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || [www.agstewardshiphawaii.org](http://www.agstewardshiphawaii.org)

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April 3, 2026

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2208 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Security**

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, we strongly support HB 2208 HD SD1, Relating to Food Security, which establishes and funds the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program within the Department of Human Services to address food shortages and require legislative reporting.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the viability of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers through technical assistance, resource coordination, business education, and policy support. In our daily work across the state, we see the stark reality of food insecurity—including among those who grow and produce our food. **Nationally, food system workers are [more than twice as likely as workers](#) in other sectors to rely on SNAP and other food assistance.** The people feeding our communities are too often struggling to feed their own families.

HB 2208 represents a fiscally responsible, high-impact investment. The Farm to Families Program addresses food insecurity while supporting local producers, keeping state dollars circulating in Hawai'i's economy, sustaining local jobs, and strengthening supply chain resilience. These funds generate multiplier effects across producers, distributors, food hubs, and communities—while reducing reliance on imported food and external supply chains. Embedding and expanding this program within core state operations ensures stability, accountability, and measurable outcomes.

**With roughly one in three Hawai'i households experiencing food insecurity, strategic investments like this are both urgent and prudent.** HB 2208 advances a smart, win-win approach that strengthens families, stabilizes agricultural businesses, and builds long-term economic resilience.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to Hawai'i's farmers, food workers, and communities. We respectfully urge your support for HB 2208.

Warm wishes,

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator

Email: [amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org](mailto:amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org),

Tel: 808 429 5310

*Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a DBA of:  
O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council, a 501c3 Nonprofit Corporation*

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 5:23:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Natalie Graham-Wood | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support HB2208 HD1 SD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I live Sunset Beach, Oahu.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 8:55:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| William Caron       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of HB2208, which establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State. The need for this legislation is urgent. **1 in 3 households in Hawai'i face food insecurity, including 34% of all children.**

The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:

- **Strengthening Hawai'i's Food Supply Chain:** By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai'i.
- **Supporting Local Farmers:** The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai'i's agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.
- **Enhancing Nutritional Access:** Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.

Please pass HB2208. Support Hawai'i's families, farmers and the sustainability of our local economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

April 2, 2026

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, and the Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Subject: **HB2208 HD1 SD1**, Relating to Food Security

Aloha,

My name is Sydney Haas and I am a farmer in Hale'iwa. I am writing in **support of HB2208 HD1 SD1**, which establishes and provides grant funding for the Hawai'i Farm to Families Program to help alleviate food shortages amongst our communities.

Our communities deserve better than to be left struggling to feed themselves and their families. Food insecure individuals are pressured to choose between nutritious choices, if available, and what is affordable enough to feed themselves and their 'ohana. Many parents are forced to skip meals, go full days without food, or for-go their prescription medicine to afford food for their keiki. Those facing hunger also experience higher rates of nutritional deficiencies, and physical and mental health disparities. No family across the pae 'āina should need to experience this level of distress. **The extent to which people need food in Hawai'i is far greater than what many of us could ever realize.**

Recent cuts to federal funding are threatening the future of Hawai'i's food banks and their ability to adequately serve our communities and farmers. Food banks rely on these funds to purchase from local farmers and to operate programs like mobile markets, which help reach underserved communities. **The demand for food bank resources remains at alarming levels, and yet, as the demand grows, support is fading.** Funding for our food banks has been slashed, resulting in a loss of millions of dollars from federal sources. The money lost could have been used to support local farmers and provide quality, nutritious, and locally grown food for our communities.

As a farmer, I understand how important the food bank's purchasing power is for local producers. This bill would support our food banks' ability to purchase in larger quantities from farms, which many other market outlets and customers aren't capable of doing. **It would provide a beneficial customer for our farms, while also helping to put more locally grown food on peoples' plates, and contributing to Hawai'i's local economies.**

**I urge the committee to pass HB2208 HD1 SD1** to help reduce hunger within our communities and support the well-being of all growing keiki. Passing this measure can help compensate for the uncertainty of support from federal sources for our food banks, and provide a beneficial market for local farmers.

Mahalo to the committee for the opportunity to testify,

Sydney Haas

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 11:17:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Marcia Kemble       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

Please support HB 2208 HD1 SD1. An extremely high percentage of households in Hawaii are experiencing food insecurity. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy by giving farmers reliable access to markets while providing our communities with nutritious food. We really need to work toward food security in the long term by increasing local food production. Food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. The Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your attention.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 12:38:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| irene kloepfer      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha. Please support this bill - our representatives need to address climate change

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 1:17:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Tamra Hayden        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

This bill is so important to be able to support our local farmers and to be able to feed ourselves. I often wonder if there would be shipping problems could we feed ourselves. The only way that could occur would be if we continue to support farmers and allow them to sell to our schools and families.

As a retired, living with rising HOA costs, electric costs, I wonder what food I could give up in order to stay in my home and pay our bills

One in three households in Hawai'i faces food insecurity, and our most vulnerable populations need our support. I strongly support this critical bill that will establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai'i farm to families program to fund food banks to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawai'i-grown or -produced food. This program ensures fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity, and helps alleviate hunger in our state.

-- Many families in Hawai'i struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is an important step toward reducing hunger in our islands. Moreover, efforts to invest in local agriculture and support our farmers builds Hawai'i's climate resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a triple win for our families, our farmers, and our climate

Thank you for your time

Tamra Hayden

Waianae, HI 96792

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 2:03:27 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Cheryl Ho           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, Sen. Dela Cruz; Sen. Moriwaki; and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

Farmers struggle to plant; tend; harvest; and market their crops to put food on their own families' tables.

Families struggle to find food that they can afford to buy, in the face of quickly rising prices. Increasingly, they have to turn to canned and other processed foods that are less healthy alternatives to fresh, culturally comfortable foods.

**I urge you to vote for HB2208:**

It would establish and appropriate funds in the form of grants for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services. This would be a mutually efficient way to meet the daily needs of farmers and consumer families!!

Mahalo nui!!

Cheryl Ho, Nu'uaniu

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 2:18:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Caroline Azelski    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 2:33:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sara Lenzer Medeiros | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

This important Bill supports both farmers and families. It's the right thing to do. And helped sustain food supply, especially for vulnerable kupuna

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 4:23:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Leo Nahe Smith | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. The Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Leo, Nu'uuanu

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 4:26:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ruta Jordans        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

With 90% of our produce coming from elsewhere, Hawaii is in dire straits if we don't increase our agriculture. By encouraging farmers to produce more food now, working with food banks, the system will be in place to make Hawaii closer to self-sustaining. A win-win for the farmers, the people who now have need for nourishing food, and for future generations. Please support HB2208.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 4:46:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| TOM DIGRAZIA        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Strong support.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 4:55:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Emma Waters         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Writing in strong support of this farm to families funding! Mahalo.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 6:43:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kathy Shimata       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

My name is Kathy Shimata & I live in Honolulu.

I strongly support the Farm to Families program. Who could be against supporting our farmers & ranchers while providing nutritious food to our families. There are many families who don't always have money to buy healthy food. Let's help our state by passing HB2208.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 8:05:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Benjamin Narwold    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

One in three households in Hawai‘i faces food insecurity, and our most vulnerable populations need our support. I strongly support this critical bill that will establish and appropriate funds for the Hawai‘i farm to families program to fund food banks to purchase, store, and transport fresh, Hawai‘i-grown or -produced food. This program ensures fresh, locally grown produce reaches families facing food insecurity, and helps alleviate hunger in our state.

Many families in Hawai‘i struggle to put food on the table on a consistent basis. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is an important step toward reducing hunger in our islands. Moreover, efforts to invest in local agriculture and support our farmers builds Hawai‘i’s climate resiliency, and avoids the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping in food. HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a triple win for our families, our farmers, and our climate!

Mahalo,  
Benjamin Narwold, Kapaa, HI

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 8:19:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Melissa Barker      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to ask that you support HB2208 HD1 SD1 which establishes and appropriates funds for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program to alleviate food shortages in the State.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:31:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Molly Mamaril       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Committee Members,

My name is Molly Mamaril from Kaimukī, O‘ahu and I am writing in strong support of Farm to Families.

With 1 in 3 households in Hawai‘i facing food insecurity, including 34% of all children, it is critical that we take action to ensure that everyone in our community has access to safe and healthy food. This bill is a win-win. It will provide critical access to fresh, culturally relevant foods for food insecure families, while also investing in local farmers and growers, who are critical to strengthening our community food systems and creating a healthier, more resilient Hawai‘i.

The partnership between local farms and food organizations benefits families in our communities and our economy by:

1. **Strengthening Hawai‘i’s Food Supply Chain:** By investing in local agriculture, we reduce our dependence on imported goods, creating a more resilient and sustainable food system for Hawai‘i.
1. **Supporting Local Farmers:** The bill offers a direct benefit to Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector, providing a steady and fair market for local produce. Farmers can plan for future growth knowing their products will feed their neighbors in need.
1. **Enhancing Nutritional Access:** Fresh, local produce provides essential nutrients to individuals and families who may otherwise lack access to healthy food options. This not only fights hunger but also promotes long-term health and wellness in our communities.

I often volunteer at food banks and distribution events and have found that the more opportunities we have to bolster our resilience, especially with local food, the more prepared we are for challenges such as climate disasters and economic shifts. Our residents need this and it is the practical step to move forward to support our local food system.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai‘i. I am grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.

Mahalo,

Molly Mamaril

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:54:29 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Carla Anderson | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Carla Anderson, Kalaheo

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:04:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Debra M Javar       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT HB 2208. It's the sensible thing to do. Mahalo

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:11:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Susan Douglas       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:23:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Georgia L Hoopes | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:37:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Regina Gregory      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

support

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:42:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Shay Chan Hodges | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:01:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Laura Gerwitz | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Laura Gerwitz  
Honolulu, HI

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:07:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| John C Wert III     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food.

Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Prof John C Wert (Ret)

Wailuku, Maui

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:18:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jun Look            | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Farmers are the linch pin on our program for local food security in Hawaii. We need to support them on many levels. This bill provides another avenue where farmers have the financial funing they need to thrive and in the long run reduce our 90% dependancy on imported food.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:55:00 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jennifer Lum | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo,

Jen Lum, Ewa Beach

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:09:28 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Inam Rahman         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

HB 2208 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

April 6, 2026 – 10:32 AM

By Inam Rahman, MD

Physician • Community Leader • West O‘ahu Resident

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support HB 2208 HD1 SD1, which establishes the Hawai‘i Farm to Families Program to improve food access while strengthening our local agricultural economy. I respectfully offer support with targeted amendments to ensure this program is effective, equitable, and fiscally responsible.

**WHY THIS BILL MATTERS**

As a physician serving West O‘ahu for over two decades, I have seen firsthand how food insecurity impacts health. Patients are often forced to make difficult choices between food, housing, and medications.

I recall a patient who quietly admitted she was taking her medications every other day because she could not afford both food and prescriptions. This is not an isolated story—it reflects a broader reality faced by many families in our community.

No one in Hawai‘i should have to choose between food and medicine.

Food insecurity is directly linked to chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. Addressing access to nutritious food is not only compassionate—it is cost-effective preventive healthcare.

#### A PRACTICAL, LOCAL SOLUTION

HB 2208 offers a thoughtful, Hawaii-based solution by:

- Supporting working families and ALICE households struggling with rising costs
- Creating reliable markets for local farmers, addressing longstanding barriers
- Reducing reliance on imported food and strengthening local food resilience
- Enhancing disaster preparedness, ensuring food banks can respond during emergencies

This approach reflects the kind of practical, community-based solutions we need—solutions that strengthen both our people and our local economy.

#### RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS AND SAFEGUARDS

To ensure the long-term success of this program, I respectfully recommend:

## 1. Performance Metrics and Reporting

Require annual reporting to the Legislature, including:

- Percentage of food sourced locally
- Number of households served
- Cost efficiency measures

This will ensure transparency and accountability.

## 2. Equitable Statewide Access

Ensure fair distribution of resources across:

- Neighbor islands
- Rural and underserved communities

Food access should not depend on zip code.

## 3. Support for Small and Mid-Sized Farmers

Include provisions for:

- Technical assistance
- Predictable purchasing agreements
- Inclusion of smaller farms

This strengthens a diverse and resilient agricultural base.

#### 4. Phased Implementation with Evaluation

Adopt a pilot or phased rollout with periodic evaluation to:

- Identify challenges early
- Improve efficiency before scaling

#### 5. Fiscal Responsibility

Ensure clear budget tracking and periodic review to confirm that funds are used efficiently and effectively.

### CONCLUSION

HB 2208 represents a meaningful step toward improving food security in Hawai'i while supporting our local farmers and strengthening our communities.

With thoughtful implementation and targeted safeguards, this program can serve as a model for how we invest in both public health and economic resilience.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this measure with the suggested amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Warm regards,

Inam Rahman, MD

Waipahū, Hawaii

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 1:27:11 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| kimdonghyeon | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

kimdonghyeon

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:25:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Michele Nihipali | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

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Mahalo for your consideration!

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 2:39:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Breon Michel | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Breon Michel, Kula, HI

Aloha Hawai'i State Legislature,

We are writing in **strong support of increased funding for the Farm to Families** program under the Department of Human Services.

Thirty-two percent (32%) of all households in Hawai'i are food insecure, including 34% of all children. In 11% of households' children are going hungry. It is critical that we take action NOW to ensure that everyone in our community has access to safe and healthy food.

Farm to Families legislation represents a meaningful opportunity to advance both food security and community resilience across the state. By increasing our investment in locally grown food for distribution to households facing hardship, Farm to Families improves access to fresh, nutritious meals while supporting Hawai'i farmers. This connection between agriculture and food assistance builds resilience for both families and farmers in times of crisis.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our shared vision of a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i. We are deeply grateful for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

|                          |           |  |
|--------------------------|-----------|--|
| Sherry Pollack           | Statewide | 350Hawaii  |
| Amanda Shaw              | Statewide | Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i                                  |
| Marcus Iwane             | Statewide | Ahahui o na Kauka, the Association of Native Hawaiian Physicians |
| Katie Crowe              | Hawai'i   | Aina Exotics LLC   |
| Tim Munley               | Kaua'i    | Aloha Church   |
| Cathy Kerch              | O'ahu     | Aloha Diaper Banl  |
| Norma Atiga              | O'ahu     | Alternative Structures International                             |
| Keolamaikalani Taniguchi | O'ahu     | Armed Services YMCA  |
| Ayme Becnel              | O'ahu     | Better Tomorrows   |
| Asaka Herman             | Kaua'i    | Boys & Girls Club of Hawaii                                      |
| Aaron Tsang              | O'ahu     | Calvary Assembly of God  |
| Lillian Carreira         | O'ahu     | Catholic charities   |
| Ron Garrison             | Kaua'i    | Church of the Pacific/Ho`okipa Kauai Food Pantries               |
| Farley Bayudan           | O'ahu     | City of Joy Assembly of God - Ohana Food Distribution            |
| Farley Bayudan           | O'ahu     | City of Joy Assembly of God, Inc.                                |
| David Worker             | O'ahu     | Community People Ministries                                      |
| Kathryn Ellman           | O'ahu     | community volunteer  |
| Raymond Donato           | O'ahu     | Crossfire Ministries   |
| Coleene Ako              | O'ahu     | Crossfire Ministries   |
| Deanna Alquiza           | Kaua'i    | EAH Housing  |
| Susanna Ho               | O'ahu     | EAH Housing Inc  |
| Neian Ponun              | Hawai'i   | Elementary school  |
| Joshua Uyehara           | Kaua'i    | Family and Friends of Agriculture                                |

|                           |           |   |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| Daynna Jones              | O'ahu     | Franciscan Vistas Ewa   |
| James DeJesus             | O'ahu     | Fresh Aloha Direct/ Aloun Farms   |
| Keith Yap                 | Kaua'i    | Gay & Robinson, Inc   |
| Bev Brody                 | Kaua'i    | Get Fit Kauai - Healthy Eating Active Living<br>Community Coalition of Kauai County |
| Violette Ishikawa         | O'ahu     | Giving Hope Hawaii  |
| Leilani Lori Bishop       | O'ahu     | Grace and Favor Church  |
| Zaasha Gonsalves          | Maui      | Hale Mahaolu  |
| Kari Hagedorn             | Maui      | Hana Farmers Market   |
| Kari Hagedorn             | Maui      | Hāna Farmers Market   |
| Jodi Robinson             | Statewide | Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO)                                  |
| Nicole Woo                | Statewide | Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!   |
| Liza Ryan Gill            | Statewide | Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights  |
| Rachel Inouye             | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Foodbank  |
| Nate Hix                  | Statewide | Hawai'i Public Health Institute   |
| Lynne Wooddell            | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Foodbank  |
| Madison Barker            | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Youth Food Council  |
| Denise Yamaguchi          | O'ahu     | Hawaii Agricultural Foundation  |
| Brent Kakesako            | Statewide | Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic<br>Development                        |
| Anne Frederick            | Statewide | Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA)                                       |
| Daniela Spoto             | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Appleseed   |
| Monica Durham             | O'ahu     | Hawaii DOE  |
| Brian Miyamoto            | O'ahu     | Hawaii Farm Bureau  |
| Elizabeth Damonte         | O'ahu     | Hawaii Food Bank Volunteer  |
| Kelsey Amos               | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Food+ Policy  |
| Brian R.                  | O'ahu     | Hawaii Foodbank   |
| Evan Poole                | O'ahu     | Hawaii Foodbank   |
| Tricia Coloma             | O'ahu     | Hawaii Foodbank   |
| Amy Miller                | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Foodbank  |
| Elia Herman               | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Foodbank  |
| Laurie Yoshida            | Kaua'i    | Hawai'i Foodbank - Kauai Advisory Board   |
| Craig Shikuma             | O'ahu     | Hawaii Foodbank Board of Directors  |
| Marcy Jackson             | O'ahu     | Hawaii Foodbank Board of Directors  |
| Andrew Ogata              | O'ahu     | Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center  |
| Dana Shapiro              | Statewide | Hawaii Ulu Cooperative  |
| Anna Marie Elderts        | O'ahu     | Hina Mauka Teen CARE  |
| Rebecca Madrid            | O'ahu     | Honolulu Fil-am SDA Church  |
| Paula Reeves              | Kaua'i    | Ho'okipa Food Pantry - Volunteer  |
| Jasmin pullman            | O'ahu     | Hope Chapel Kahuku  |
| Kimey Kalua               | O'ahu     | HUGS Hawaii   |
| Indivisible West<br>O'ahu | O'ahu     | Indivisible West O'ahu  |
| Estrelita Andres          | O'ahu     | Jesus is Alive Fellowship   |
| ESTRELITA.<br>ANDRES      | O'ahu     | Jesus is Alive Fellowship   |

|                        |        |   |
|------------------------|--------|---|
| Mia Nishiguchi         | O'ahu  | Kalani High School  |
| Louetta Davis          | O'ahu  | Kalihi Palama Health Center - Kohou   |
| Mark Willman           | Kaua'i | Kaua'i Bible Church   |
| Bernadette Tanalin     | Kaua'i | Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc.  |
| Kayla Marin            | Kaua'i | Keala Foundation  |
| Stephanie Iona         | Kaua'i | Kekaha Agriculture Assn   |
| Stephanie Iona         | Kaua'i | Kekaha Agriculture Association  |
| Aurora Mendoza         | Kaua'i | Kings Lihue church  |
| Martyn Benjamin        | O'ahu  | Kokua Kalihi Valley   |
| Leslie Moody           | O'ahu  | Kroc Center Hawaii  |
| Larry Smith            | O'ahu  | Kupuna Caucus of DPH  |
| Melissa Ka'onohi-Camit | O'ahu  | Lāhui Foundation  |
| Rachel Alexander       | O'ahu  | Lakeside Alliance   |
| Lisa Yanagida          | Maui   | Lanakila Club   |
| Rona Yagi              | O'ahu  | Lanakila Pacific  |
| Fukumoto               |        |   |
| Yvonne Johnson         | Kaua'i | Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry (Lihue); also small farmer on south shore (rural Koloa) |
| Gracie Albright        | Maui   | Lokelani 'Ohana Resource Center (Lokelani Intermeidate School)                      |
| Noe Neumann            | O'ahu  | Lokoea Farms  |
| Ricky Kang             | O'ahu  | Love & Light Ministries   |
| Megan Fox              | Kaua'i | Mālama Kaua'i   |
| Kilihune Meyer         | Kaua'i | Malama Kauai  |
| Chery Gourley          | O'ahu  | MARSH - Pyramid Insurance   |
| Debbie Cabebe          | Maui   | Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.   |
| Addie Texeira-Browne   | Maui   | Maui Food Bank  |
| Brandi Saragosa        | Maui   | Maui Food Bank  |
| Lisa Paulson           | Maui   | Maui Food Bank  |
| Moana Lutey            | Maui   | Maui Food Bank  |
| Steve Ulene            | Maui   | Maui Food Bank  |
| Marsha Fahir           | Maui   | Maui Food Bank - Board Chair  |
| Steve Ulene            | Maui   | Maui Food Bank Board of Trustees  |
| Michele                | Maui   | McLean  |
| Nona Etse              | O'ahu  | Message of peace ministry outreach  |
| Judy Guajardo          | Maui   | Na Hoaloha  |
| Jason Brand            | O'ahu  | Nalo Farms LLC  |
| Sadie Lasell           | O'ahu  | New Life Body Of Christ Christian Church  |
| Dale Jensen            | O'ahu  | none  |
| Linda Seyler           | O'ahu  | North Shore Food Bank   |
| Cynthia Archibald      | O'ahu  | North Shore Nutrition   |
| Laverne Suster         | O'ahu  | OLPH Food Pantry Ministry   |
| Nick Cambra            | O'ahu  | Our Lady Of Mount Carmel Catholic Church  |
| Mark Yen               | O'ahu  | Our Lady of Sorrows   |

|                      |          |   |
|----------------------|----------|---|
| Owen Kaneshiro       | O'ahu    | Owen K. Kaneshiro Farms, LLC                                      |
| Sheila Medeiros      | O'ahu    | Radical Hale  |
| Marlow DeRego        | O'ahu    | Retired   |
| Lesah Merritt        | Kaua'i   | Safeway; Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i Advisory Board                   |
| Jana Dove            | O'ahu    | Saint Timothy's Episcopal Church Aiea                             |
| Addie Texeira-Browne | Maui     | Self at Maui Food Bank  |
| Alberta Patchen      | Moloka'i | St Damien Molokai Parish  |
| Paul Patchen         | Moloka'i | St Damien Molokai Parish  |
| Sandy Kealoha        | O'ahu    | St Matthews Episcopal Church                                      |
| Deann Megonnell      | Kaua'i   | St Michaels Loaves & Fishes                                       |
| Lauralee Kawamata    | O'ahu    | St Timothy's episcopal church                                     |
| Edward Van Houten    | O'ahu    | St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Wahiawa, HI.                      |
| Peter Wallace        | O'ahu    | St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 'Aiea                             |
| Rev.Peter Wallace    | O'ahu    | St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 'Aiea                             |
| Thao Nguyen          | O'ahu    | Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church                                 |
| Kristin Frost        | Hawai'i  | The Food Basket Inc., Hawai'i Island's Food Bank                  |
| Albrecht             |          |   |
| Cynthia Maile        | O'ahu    | The Food Pantry at St. Clement                                    |
| Hatfield             |          |   |
| John Heidel          | O'ahu    | The Interfaith Alliance of Hawai'i                                |
| Jennine Sullivan     | O'ahu    | The Pantry by Feeding Hawaii Together                             |
| Carrol smmons        | O'ahu    | The Private Sector Charity  |
| David Lucus          | O'ahu    | The Salvation Army  |
| Johnny Gordines      | Kaua'i   | Tropical Flowers Express  |
| Joseph               | O'ahu    | University of Hawaii  |
| Keawe'aimoku         |          |   |
| Kaholokula           |          |   |
| Mariailiana stark    | O'ahu    | University of Hawaii at manoa                                     |
| Brian Randle         | O'ahu    | US Navy   |
| Elizabeth Kekua      | O'ahu    | Voice of God Ministries   |
| Liliuokalani Coyle   | O'ahu    | Voice of God Ministries   |
| Melissa Moriguchi    | O'ahu    | Wahiawa Elementary School   |
| Moana Silva          | O'ahu    | Waianae Baptist Church  |
| Fuli Soa             | O'ahu    | Waimānalo Elementary & Intermediate School Family Resource Center |
| Kelsey Kim           | O'ahu    | Wellspring Covenant Church  |
| Rebecca Stringer     | O'ahu    | Wellspring Covenant Church  |
| Cheryl Lum           | Kaua'i   | YWCA of Kauai   |

|                 |       |                   |        |
|-----------------|-------|-------------------|--------|
| Aalia Meer      | O'ahu | Kathryn Kane      | O'ahu  |
| Adele Tasaka    | O'ahu | Katina Marx       | O'ahu  |
| Adriann Gin     | O'ahu | Keala Menza       | O'ahu  |
| Alan Terasako   | O'ahu | Keith Yap         | Kaua'i |
| Alexis Davidson | O'ahu | Kekua Kobashigawa | O'ahu  |
| Allyn Kau       | O'ahu | Kiana Lee         | O'ahu  |

|                        |           |                           |           |
|------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| An Vo                  | O'ahu     | Kim Campbell              | O'ahu     |
| Angel Luong            | O'ahu     | Kimberly Golis-Robello    | O'ahu     |
| Angeline Santos        | O'ahu     | Kristen Hahn              | O'ahu     |
| Ann Stagnaro           | O'ahu     | Kristi Hammond            | O'ahu     |
| Anna Gregorio          | O'ahu     | Kyra Shells               | O'ahu     |
| Anne Chamness          | O'ahu     | Laetitia Thibault-Santoro | Statewide |
| Annette Tashiro        | O'ahu     | Lane Daigle               | O'ahu     |
| Annie Green            | O'ahu     | LaTrisha Granston         | O'ahu     |
| Annika Seavey          | O'ahu     | Laura Kanetake            | O'ahu     |
| Anton Avanzoian        | Maui      | Laura Pokipala            | O'ahu     |
| Ariana Hansen          | O'ahu     | Lauren Long               | O'ahu     |
| Ashlyn Pua Borges      | O'ahu     | Lauren Nelson             | Maui      |
| Athens p               | O'ahu     | Laurie Nakama             | O'ahu     |
| Autasia Sakaria        | O'ahu     | Lauta'amutafea Shen       | O'ahu     |
| Barbara DeBaryshe      | O'ahu     | Lei-Anne Jones            | O'ahu     |
| Berna Rabutan          | O'ahu     | Leigh Ann Lopez           | O'ahu     |
| Bethany Ortiz-D'Amico  | O'ahu     | Leihua Park               | O'ahu     |
| Brandi Saragosa        | Maui      | Leilani Kim               | O'ahu     |
| Brianna Lloyd          | O'ahu     | Leslie Detor              | O'ahu     |
| Bridgetmarie Kaolulo   | O'ahu     | Leticia Calles            | O'ahu     |
| Brittany Murray        | O'ahu     | Lillian Rodolfich         | O'ahu     |
| Candy Green            | O'ahu     | Lilson Maile Laau         | O'ahu     |
| Carlo Cayetano         | O'ahu     | Linda Estes               | Kaua'i    |
| Carlyne Averell        | Statewide | Lindsay Domantay          | O'ahu     |
| Carol Kinoshita Lau    | O'ahu     | Lisa Brenneman            | Statewide |
| Carol Nakamura         | O'ahu     | Lisa Kelliher             | O'ahu     |
| carole richelieu       | O'ahu     | Lisa Shandoria Johnson    | O'ahu     |
| Caroline Azelski       | Hawai'i   | Lisa Wong                 | O'ahu     |
| Caroline Wilhite       | O'ahu     | Liz Okun                  | O'ahu     |
| Carolyn                | O'ahu     | Lori Bishop               | O'ahu     |
| Ce'Lene Sakellis       | O'ahu     | Lori Lynn Aoki            | O'ahu     |
| Charlene Duplantier    | O'ahu     | Lori Watkins              | O'ahu     |
| Charlene Hosenfeld     | O'ahu     | Lori Yuh                  | O'ahu     |
| Charlene Mancusi       | O'ahu     | Lorraine Asano            | O'ahu     |
| Charlie King           | Kaua'i    | Louise Wolcott            | O'ahu     |
| Charlotte Baker        | O'ahu     | Lynda Antonio             | Kaua'i    |
| Chelsea McDonough      | O'ahu     | Lynda Messier             | O'ahu     |
| Cheryl Hunt            | O'ahu     | Mae Althea Gallardo       | O'ahu     |
| Cheryl Treiber-Kawaoka | O'ahu     | Maeve O'Donnell Pax       | Kaua'i    |
| Christen Oliveira      | O'ahu     | Māhealani Kobashigawa     | O'ahu     |
| Christine Andrews      | Maui      | Malia Ellis               | O'ahu     |
| Christine Evans        | O'ahu     | Mar Scott                 | O'ahu     |
| Christine Mitchell     | O'ahu     | Marcos Cruz Ortiz         | O'ahu     |
| Cindy Verdespina       | O'ahu     | Margaret Reager           | O'ahu     |
| Claire Narimasu        | O'ahu     | Marie Sode                | O'ahu     |
| Claudia Moreno         | O'ahu     | Mario Tabaquin            | O'ahu     |
| Connie Lu              | O'ahu     | Marion Berkline           | O'ahu     |
| Cristal Mortensen      | O'ahu     | Mary Ellen Rubio          | O'ahu     |
| Curstyn Yoshimoto      | O'ahu     | Maureen Copeskey          | O'ahu     |
| Cyd Hoffeld            | Hawai'i   | Me Manu-Lee               | O'ahu     |
| D.Lee                  | O'ahu     | Meredith Torres           | O'ahu     |

|                             |           |                          |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Dale Jensen                 | O'ahu     | Michael Baker            | O'ahu     |
| Dan Fong                    | O'ahu     | Michael Bishop           | O'ahu     |
| Dana Keawe                  | Hawai'i   | Michael Jones            | O'ahu     |
| Daniel Smith                | O'ahu     | Michelle Espinoza        | O'ahu     |
| Darlene Gaco                | O'ahu     | Michelle Frederick       | O'ahu     |
| David Jones                 | O'ahu     | michelle rainville       | O'ahu     |
| Debbie Millikan             | O'ahu     | Mitchell Matsumori-Kelly | O'ahu     |
| Deborah Miles               | O'ahu     | Molly Mamaril            | O'ahu     |
| Debra Auld                  | O'ahu     | Monica esquivel          | O'ahu     |
| Debra Kaawalauole           | O'ahu     | Monzell Davis            | O'ahu     |
| Delmar J Bayang             | O'ahu     | Nanami Jones             | O'ahu     |
| Diana Kellum                | O'ahu     | Natalie Hasegawa         | O'ahu     |
| Diane Bruce                 | O'ahu     | Nina Jo-Ring             | O'ahu     |
| Diane Decker                | Kaua'i    | Nina Lum                 | O'ahu     |
| Eduardo                     | O'ahu     | Nina Yopp                | O'ahu     |
| Eileen Sanchez              | O'ahu     | Noel Shaw                | O'ahu     |
| Elaine Allwine-Caspers      | O'ahu     | Norma Murayama           | O'ahu     |
| Elise krause                | O'ahu     | Norman Van Vactor        | Kaua'i    |
| Elizabeth Grossman          | O'ahu     | Pam Clifford             | O'ahu     |
| Elizabeth Hahn              | Kaua'i    | Paula T. Ortiz           | O'ahu     |
| Elna Nagasako               | O'ahu     | Phyllis Krajewski        | O'ahu     |
| Emi Kaneshiro               | O'ahu     | Polina Dineva            | O'ahu     |
| Emma Waters                 | Hawai'i   | Rachel Novotny           | O'ahu     |
| Faith Faustorilla           | O'ahu     | Rachel Reyes-Huynh       | O'ahu     |
| Farley Bayudan              | O'ahu     | Raisa Kakigi             | O'ahu     |
| Fiaalii Filisi              | O'ahu     | Ramon De La Cruz         | Statewide |
| Fran Gendrano               | O'ahu     | Randy Junkman            | O'ahu     |
| Franz Schnell               | O'ahu     | Rebecca Hartman          | O'ahu     |
| Gary Rickard                | O'ahu     | Reton Shiu               | O'ahu     |
| Gayle Goodman               | O'ahu     | Rev. Dr John Heidel      | Statewide |
| Genevieve Mumma             | O'ahu     | Richard Valasek          | O'ahu     |
| Geraldine Baldassarre       | Hawai'i   | Rik Masterson            | Hawai'i   |
| Ginger Matusiak             | O'ahu     | Rinka Shimizu            | O'ahu     |
| Glenna Morrissey            | O'ahu     | Risé Doi                 | O'ahu     |
| Gustavo de a Pena           | O'ahu     | Robert and Jean Johnson  | O'ahu     |
| Gustavo de la Pena Valencia | O'ahu     | Robert Justice, M.D.     | O'ahu     |
| Hailey Veltri               | O'ahu     | Roger Breisch            | O'ahu     |
| Hans Van Tilburg            | O'ahu     | Roy Kimura               | O'ahu     |
| Hervie Messier              | O'ahu     | Russell                  | O'ahu     |
| Holly Elder                 | O'ahu     | Sandra Pepee             | O'ahu     |
| Ian Valasek                 | O'ahu     | Sandra Schulman          | O'ahu     |
| ingrid jansson              | O'ahu     | Sandy Chen               | O'ahu     |
| Jaclyn Maher                | O'ahu     | Scott Sonoda             | O'ahu     |
| Jacqueline Mapuana          | O'ahu     | Sharon Stehlik           | O'ahu     |
| Kamehamehal                 | O'ahu     | Sheri Washburn           | O'ahu     |
| Jane Arnold                 | O'ahu     | Shona Petersen           | O'ahu     |
| Jane E Arnold               | O'ahu     | Stacey Hendrickson       | O'ahu     |
| Jane George                 | O'ahu     | Tangela Manuelwatts      | O'ahu     |
| Jared Kawatani              | O'ahu     | Tayla-Angel Jimenez      | O'ahu     |
| Jayne Takaki                | Statewide | Taylor Bair              | O'ahu     |
| Jeanne Herbert              | O'ahu     |                          |           |

|                      |           |                        |        |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------------|--------|
| Jenna Hausvik        | O'ahu     | Terri Nakasone         | O'ahu  |
| Jennifer Baxter      | Kaua'i    | Terrie Wehrli          | O'ahu  |
| Jennifer Hudson      | O'ahu     | tia pearson            | O'ahu  |
| Jess Ivey            | Kaua'i    | Timothy K Blaisdell    | O'ahu  |
| Jessica Kuzmier      | Statewide | Tom Stagnaro           | O'ahu  |
| Jessica Parayno      | O'ahu     | Travis Hipolito        | O'ahu  |
| Jimmy Fung           | O'ahu     | Tricia Coloma          | O'ahu  |
| Jodie Paulos         | O'ahu     | U'ilani Kapuaakuni     | O'ahu  |
| John Gordines        | Kaua'i    | Valerie Chang          | Kaua'i |
| John Kojima          | O'ahu     | Valerie Hashimoto      | O'ahu  |
| John Stahl           | O'ahu     | Valline Schmidt        | O'ahu  |
| John Todt            | O'ahu     | Vanessa Mamhot         | O'ahu  |
| Jonathan Wong        | O'ahu     | Veronica Sablan        | O'ahu  |
| Jordan Smith         | O'ahu     | Walter Young           | O'ahu  |
| Joseph Godbout       | O'ahu     | Ward Whipple           | Maui   |
| Joyce Aquino         | O'ahu     | Ana Kia                | O'ahu  |
| Joyce Umali Perreira | O'ahu     | Brynne Burrows         | O'ahu  |
| Julia Jay            | Statewide | Cailey G               | O'ahu  |
| Kaeo Kim             | O'ahu     | Cristal Mortensen      | O'ahu  |
| Kailey Wilt          | O'ahu     | Grace Sherley          | O'ahu  |
| Karen Valasek        | O'ahu     | Kyle Phillips Ramsvig  | O'ahu  |
| Kat Saneewong        | O'ahu     | Lee Winter             | O'ahu  |
| Katherine Park       | O'ahu     | Taylor Ka'ili McKenzie | O'ahu  |
| Kathryn Ellman       | O'ahu     | Vicky Crowder          | O'ahu  |

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 4:33:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sang Pak            | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I have seen first hand as a volunteer the effectiveness of this program. Food insecurity is a huge issue in Hawaii which is obvious to all. Programs like SNAP are not enough to address the complexity of the issue. A multi-pronged approach is necessary and I believe programs like farm to families fill gaps and strengthen to feed the people, our families and friends.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 5:28:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| David Ball          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support this legislation

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 6:19:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| KEALA FUNG   | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Keala Fung, Honolulu

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 6:52:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Ann Dorsey          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I urge you to **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Thank you

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 9:48:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Katherine Metzger   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB2208.

This measure represents a meaningful step toward a more equitable and regenerative food future for Hawai‘i. By strengthening support for our food banks while prioritizing locally sourced food from island farmers, HB2208 addresses two critical needs at once: food security and agricultural resilience.

Hawai‘i currently relies heavily on imported food, leaving our communities vulnerable to supply chain disruptions and rising costs. At the same time, many local farmers struggle to access consistent markets for their products. HB2208 helps bridge this gap by creating a system where locally grown food nourishes our communities—especially those facing food insecurity—while directly supporting our farmers and keeping resources circulating within our local economy.

Investing in local food systems is also an investment in the health of our ‘āina. Supporting regenerative and locally adapted agriculture helps protect soil, water, and biodiversity, ensuring that future generations can continue to thrive.

Equity is at the heart of this bill. Access to fresh, healthy, culturally appropriate food should not be a privilege—it is a basic need. By strengthening partnerships between food banks and local producers, HB2208 uplifts both our communities and those who steward the land.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB2208 and help build a stronger, more self-sufficient, and resilient Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Katie Metzger,

Founder of Hānai Hives



**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:07:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By        | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Laila Moire-Selvage | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii reports experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities' resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families, and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Laila Moire-Selvage, Mountain View (96771)

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:09:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Katherine Fryer     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly support HB2208 HD1 SD1.

With one in three households in Hawai‘i facing food insecurity, including 34% of all children, it is critical that we take action to ensure that everyone in our community has access to safe and healthy food. This bill will help provide critical access to fresh, culturally relevant foods for low income families, while also investing in local farmers and growers, who are critical to strengthening our community food systems and ensuring Hawai'i's health and resilience.

I respectfully urge you to please pass this measure.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:52:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kencho Gurung | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kencho Gurung, Hilo

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 6:44:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By    | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| B.A. McClintock | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:08:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Priscilla Stuckey   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, Chair and Members of the Committee,

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1** to set up the Farm to Families Program and address food shortages in Hawai'i .

We have an unconscionable number of hungry people in Hawai'i. One in three households in Hawai'i report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. This bill would support food banks in purchasing locally grown food to feed hungry people.

A Farm to Families program helps communities, and it helps farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. Food security depends on food independence, and we need to invest in our local food economy to increase Hawai'i's resilience and ability to provide for ourselves long-term.

Please support **HB 2208 HD1 SD1** and invest in local food security.

Mahalo,

Priscilla Stuckey, Kihei

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:33:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By                     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku<br>Stormcrow | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Committee,

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1.**

The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai'i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai'i's families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Kapu'euhi

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 11:27:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Annalise Hart | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Annalise

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 12:05:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jessica Kuzmier     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB2208. I fully support our food banks sourcing locally grown food for our community. Mahalo for your consideration.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Monday, April 6, 2026 at 10:32 am  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2208, HD1, SD1 - RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Senator Hashimoto for my district, Senator DeCoite of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews and I am a long-term resident of Wailuku, Maui. I write to you today in **strong support of HB 2208, HD1, SD1**, Relating to Food Security, which establishes and appropriates funds in the form of grants for the Hawaii Farm to Families Program under the Department of Human Services to alleviate food shortages in the State and requires reports to the Legislature.

I remember that when my daughters were in elementary and middle school on Maui they had a school garden. The students participated in a research project with Cornell University whereby they trialed different soil rehabilitation techniques, collected samples, and documented their results. I remember with pride my daughters speaking about the results of this project to a standing-room-only meeting of the Hawaii Farmers Union United chapter at the Haiku Community Center. This experience really shaped my children's educational future and our choices as a family.

My youngest daughter went on to study environmental science at Vassar College. Her senior thesis focused on the subject of sustainability and food security in Hawaii. Her elementary school garden teacher had gone on to be executive director of Grow Some Good. After graduation, my daughter returned to Maui, and we make our weekly shopping trip to the Upcountry Farmers Market. We fully embrace the circular economy of depending on our farmers rather than imports for food. Venison stew made of locally-sourced axis deer by Maui Nui Venison is one of our favorites. My tenant is a teacher at Baldwin High School. He received grants to develop a hydroponic system for his classroom to produce tilapia and fresh produce. Farm to Families is modern Maui culture, and I have seen the benefits to health, well-being, community, and our economy from such efforts.

As a result of my lived experience with farm to families such as mine, I **strongly support HB 2008, HD1, SD1** and request that you do as well.

Mahalo nui for supporting Hawai'i students, families, and farmers,

Christine L. Andrews, J.D.  
Wailuku, Maui

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:27:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ben Emery           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

The influx of imports and outside investment in Hawai'i is eroding the sense of security for permanent residents, jeopardizing their stability and well-being.

Investing in local small-scale farmers and strengthening our community is essential for building a more secure and resilient Hawai'i.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:47:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| ANDREW ISODA | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please **support HB 2208 HD1 SD1**. The statistics around food insecurity in Hawai‘i are staggering. One in three households in Hawaii report experiencing food insecurity. Nearly half (46%) of ALICE households lack consistent access to food. Increasing the ability of food banks to purchase locally grown food is a win-win for our communities and farmers. One major challenge local farmers face is access to markets. This will help grow our local food and agriculture economy while providing our communities with nutritious food. As the cost of imports continues to increase, investing in our local food economy will help bolster our local production and food security in the long term.

Preparing Hawai‘i’s families in the wake of disaster, food banks rely almost exclusively on private donations and grants, even though local governments rely heavily on them during times of crisis. As we seek to prepare our communities resiliency as an effort to improve emergency and disaster preparedness, the Farm to Families program would provide funding for purchasing from local farmers, improving emergency food access for families and opening up a local market for farmers during times of economic crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Andrew Isoda  
Lahaina, Mau‘i

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 11:27:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| K. McGlone          | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

This bill helps families and farmers.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:41:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Helen Cox           | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd and members of the FIN committee:

I strongly support SB2110 SD1 HD1 because it will improve the health of Hawaii agriculture and farmers as well as our environment.

This bill establishes a Conservation Agriculture and Soil Health Incentive Program within the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (CCMAC).

Consolidation under CCMAC removes administrative barriers for farmers to obtain financial incentives and technical assistance and improves statewide conservation efforts. This will lead to better water regulation, higher crop yield, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, biodiversity support, pollutant filtration, and erosion prevention. Please pass SB2110 SD1 HD1 out of your committee.

Mahalo!

Helen Cox, Kalaheo

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 8:47:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Glen Kagamida       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

**STRONG SUPPORT!!! MAHALO!**

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:40:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| JON BRODZIAK        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Food insecurity is a serious problem in Hawai‘i. I strongly support HB2208 HD1 SD1 because too many families in our state struggle to afford healthy food. Too many children in Hawai‘i also live with hunger.

This bill will help families get fresh local food. The Hawai‘i Farm to Families Program will help food banks provide fresh, locally grown, and culturally relevant food to families in need. It will also help food banks purchase, store, and transport Hawai‘i-grown and Hawai‘i-produced food more effectively.

This bill will also support local farmers. Investing in local farmers and growers strengthens Hawai‘i’s food system. It also keeps more food dollars in our islands.

This measure will help Hawai‘i become more resilient. Our state depends too heavily on imported food. Supporting local food production is a practical step toward a stronger future.

HB2208 HD1 SD1 is a compassionate and practical bill. It will reduce hunger. It will support local agriculture. Please pass this important measure.

**HB-2208-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 11:30:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2026 10:32:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jane E Arnold       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

My name is Jane Arnold and I live in Kaimuki. I'm requesting that you support HB2208 HD1 SD1. It's a win for farmers and for food-insecure families. Thank you