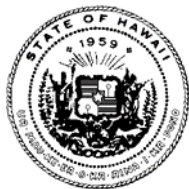


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



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

March 22, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2310 HD1 – MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.**

**Hearing:** March 23, 2026, Time 1:40 p.m.  
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) strongly supports this administration bill, which makes an emergency appropriation to DHS for emergency food assistance to recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, expanded food distribution and delivery, and call center support during the 2025 federal government shutdown. Importantly, DHS requests an amendment to incorporate the Governor's request for an additional \$16.5M in general funds to help cover health insurance costs resulting from the expiration of the enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) tax credits on December 31, 2025, which Congress did not renew.

DHS respectfully requests an emergency appropriation of \$30,748,126 in general funds to restore DHS program funding for state fiscal year (SFY) 2025-2026; the amount is comprised of \$14,248,126 used to address food insecurity during the 2025 federal government shutdown, and \$16,500,000 that will be used to assist residents in continuing to afford health care coverage provided by the ACA.

The federal government shutdown from October 1, 2025, through November 12, 2025,

threatened food security statewide and disrupted federal programs, including the employment and compensation of Hawaii's federal workforce and contractors. During the shutdown, DHS faced significant operational challenges when the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, issued multiple instructions that caused considerable confusion about the amount and timing of the November distribution of SNAP benefits.

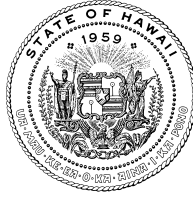
To ensure continued access to food for residents impacted by the shutdown, DHS redirected \$46,151,160 in general fund appropriations from multiple program IDs and established the Hawaii Emergency Food Assistance Program (HEFAP). The HEFAP provided a \$250 food benefit to eligible SNAP recipient households. Redirected funds were also used to contract with the Hawai'i Foodbank and its statewide network to increase food availability for the public; with Aloha United Way to provide call center support to assist residents in locating resources; and for DHS information technology services to facilitate benefit distribution.

As of November 25, 2025, DHS successfully issued the HEFAP food benefit to 81,399 eligible SNAP households, representing 161,549 individuals. The benefit cost for 27,406 eligible households with a dependent child, totaling 101,655 individuals, was covered with federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds. The remaining balance of \$14,248,126 in redirected general fund appropriations, specifically: \$11,807,126 for HEFAP, \$2,000,000 to support Hawaii Foodbank for purchase and distribution of food, and \$441,000 to the Aloha United Way for 211 call center support, must be restored to ensure that DHS programs can meet their SFY 2025-2026 obligations and to avoid incurring penalties and interest.

The Office of the Governor is working with DHS to determine how to assist residents in covering the cost of health insurance available through the federal marketplace. Some residents who relied on the enhanced ACA tax credits to purchase health insurance are facing higher premiums and need assistance to maintain coverage. DHS requires an additional appropriation of \$16.5 million in general funds to implement this effort.

DHS respectfully requests the amount of \$30,748,126 be inserted in Section 3 and the measure be expedited.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure and for the Legislature's support.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

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

**Senate Committee on Health and Human Services**

Monday, March 23, 2026

1:40 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

**In Support**

**House Bill No. 2310, HD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the  
Department of Human Services**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

The Office of the Governor **strongly supports** H.B. No. 2310, HD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Services. This bill would provide the Department of Human Services with an emergency appropriation to the department to restore general fund appropriations that were redirected to address the federal shutdown last year to provide residents with access to food and reduce food insecurity. While the current HD1 version of the bill has a blank appropriation, we respectfully ask that the Committee consider an amount of \$14,248,126 to cover the costs associated with the department's response.

The Office of the Governor would also like to request an additional appropriation amount of \$16.5 million in this bill, to be expended by the Department of Human Services, to help cover the costs of the enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) tax credits for everyone in Hawai'i that are currently using them to buy insurance – to keep coverage affordable for our families, seniors, and children. No family in Hawai'i should have to choose between receiving medical care or having to skip purchasing basic needs because of the ACA subsidies expiring in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure and for the Committee's consideration of the additional appropriation request.

**HB-2310-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 9:25:49 PM

Testimony for HHS on 3/23/2026 1:40:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Angela Young	Testifying for CARES   Community Advocacy Research Education Services	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support



## HIPHI Board

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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: March 20, 2026

To: Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Sen. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: Support for HB 2310 HD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the  
Department of Human Services

Hrg: March 25, 2026, at 1:40 PM, Conference Room 225

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)<sup>1</sup> and the Healthy Eating, Active Living<sup>2</sup> (HEAL) Coalition **supports HB 2310 HD1**, which makes an emergency appropriation to the Department of Human Services to provide emergency assistance to households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

### Support in Uncertain Times

During the government shutdown in 2025, where federal SNAP benefits were paused, Hawai'i stood strong with our SNAP community, providing \$250 per person. This essential support was a lifeline to the more than 140,000 residents enrolled in this program.

Ensuring the Department of Human Services (DHS) receives funds to compensate for this program is important to ensure DHS or any other agency has the green light to support our communities when the time comes.

### SNAP Necessity

With over 140,000 Hawai'i residents participating in SNAP, receiving on average \$370 per month, this program is incredibly important for the livelihoods of not just those enrolled in SNAP but also our state as a whole. \$600 million annually flows into our state via federal SNAP benefits, helping families eat and circulating throughout our economy.

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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.



The state's commitment to this program is needed now and into the future, especially given the unpredictable support that the federal government will provide.

Thank you for your strong commitment to our families in need and your continued support for the departments that serve them.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nate Hix". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Nate" and "Hix" being capitalized and prominent.

Nate Hix  
Director of Policy and Advocacy



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Re: **HB2310 HD1 – Making an Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Service**  
Hawaii State Capitol & Via Videoconference  
March 23, 2026; 1:40 PM

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB2310 HD1**, which provides an emergency appropriation to the Department of Human Services to replace general fund appropriations redirected to provide emergency food assistance during the 2025 federal government shutdown.

During last fall's federal government shutdown, thousands of low-income Hawai'i families faced the start of November without their SNAP benefits loaded onto their EBT cards. We mahalo our state for being among the 11 states that stepped up with state funds to fill in that puka and make sure that our SNAP families didn't go hungry during that gap.<sup>1</sup>

In Hawai'i, SNAP plays a critical role in supporting many of our most vulnerable residents. More than half of SNAP recipients in Hawai'i are in families with children, and SNAP lifted 62,000 people above the poverty line in Hawai'i, including 26,000 children, per year between 2015 and 2019, on average.<sup>2</sup>

The average SNAP benefit per household with children in Hawai'i was \$1,098 per month in fiscal year 2022. In 2024, Hawai'i received \$732.5 million in SNAP benefits, not only lifting up low-income families, but also directly supporting approximately 900 food retailers in Hawai'i.

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

Thank you,

Nicole Woo  
Director of Research and Economic Policy

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.multistate.us/insider/2025/11/5/state-lawmakers-jump-into-action-as-federal-shutdown-suspends-food-assistance-programs>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/a-closer-look-at-who-benefits-from-snap-state-by-state-fact-sheets#Hawai'i>



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**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 Health and Human Services  
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 23, 2026

TIME: 1:40pm

RE: HB2310 HD1 Making and Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Services

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 to provide an emergency appropriation to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to replace general fund appropriations redirected to provide emergency food assistance during the 2025 federal government shutdown.

The Federal Government shutdown in October of 2025 resulted in disruptions to the timely distribution of SNAP benefits, threatening the food security of households who rely on these payments for essential nutrition.

We are extremely grateful to Governor Green, State Legislators, and DHS administrators for their support in providing emergency funding in November to ensure that Hawaii families who rely on SNAP benefits would have funds available to purchase food.

The Government shutdown created a crisis of uncertainty around SNAP funding, which is such a vital tool in combatting food insecurity in our state, and around the country. We are proud that our State met that challenge in the best way possible.



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**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Advisor*

**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

Hawaii showed incredible proactive leadership in stepping up for the neediest people in our state by loading EBT cards with an additional state funded \$250 per SNAP recipient to address the potential hunger crisis that could have resulted from the government shutdown.

We urge the Committee to pass this measure, and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

### **SUPPORT FOR HB 2310 HD1: MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

TO: Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i  
Hearing: Monday, March 23; 1:40 PM; CR 225 or Videoconference

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Committee pm Health & Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB 2310 HD1**, which provides an emergency appropriation to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to replace general fund appropriations redirected to provide emergency food assistance during the 2025 federal government shutdown.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax-exempt, Community-Based Organization that has provided social services in Hawai'i for more than 78 years, now serving over 40,000 individuals statewide each year. Because of our mission to strengthen families and support those most in need, we are deeply concerned about issues of food insecurity across our islands.

With amazement and deep gratitude, we reflect on the State's swift response to the threat that hundreds of thousands of Hawai'i residents would lose essential food benefits during the 2025 federal shutdown. In the midst of chaos and uncertainty, DHS quickly redirected funding to keep food on the tables of 161,549 SNAP recipients as well as 101,655 individuals in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF). Wow!

Now it is critical to replenish these funds so DHS can continue provide the services that thousands of families across Hawai'i rely on. This bill would enable DHS to regain its capacity not only to serve SNAP participants but **also to continue other critical services that support thousands of Hawai'i families**. We respectfully urge your support for an emergency appropriation of \$14,248,126 to the Department of Human Services.

Hawai'i continues to face unacceptably high levels of food insecurity. *The State of Food Insecurity in Hawai'i 2024-2025* reports that **32% of Hawaii households experience food insecurity**, and **11% of households went an entire day without eating** at least once in the past year. These figures represent real people in our communities—families, elders, and children struggling to meet basic needs. In these uncertain times, Hawai'i must strengthen the resilience of its food systems and protect those most vulnerable. This bill is a vital step to ensure that DHS can continue to support our kupuna, families and children with the food they urgently need.

Again, we repeat our **huge Mahalo to the State, the Legislature and the Department of Human Services for the incredible swift actions** taken in the chaos facing us during the 2025 federal government closure.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i urges your support for this bill. If you have any questions, please contact Betty Lou Larson, at (808) 527-4813.



CLARENCE T. C. CHING CAMPUS • 1822 Ke'eaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822  
Phone (808) 527-4813 •





**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Monday, March 23, 2026; 1:40 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2310, HOUSE DRAFT 1, MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.**

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, 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** House Bill No. 2310, House Draft 1, MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

This measure, as received by Your Committee, would authorize an emergency appropriation of an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2025-2026, for the Department of Human Services (DHS) to appropriate general funds to replenish the remaining balance of fiscal year 2025-2026 general fund appropriations that were redirected to support Hawaii residents' food security, and enable DHS to meet its existing obligations and avoid the assessment of penalties and interest.

This measure would take effect upon on July 1, 3000.

**Testimony on House Bill No. 2310, House Draft 1**  
**Monday, March 23, 2026, 1:40 p.m.**  
**Page 2**

SNAP, formally known as the "Food Stamps Program", is the largest federal food assistance program that is currently in operation. It provides food purchasing assistance for low- and no-income people. SNAP helped approximately 40 million persons in 2018, at a cost of \$57.1 billion. Approximately 9.2% of American households received SNAP benefits at some point during 2017, with approximately 16.7% of all children living in households receiving SNAP benefits.

Founded during the height of the Great Depression, SNAP is the cornerstone of our national social safety net. It is intended to prevent mass starvation caused by unemployment and homelessness. SNAP also seen as a way of helping the poor while boosting the economy and ensuring that American's farmers would obtain a fair price for their labors by allowing government to purchase and distribute excess goods in time of crisis.

The HPCA has strongly endorsed SNAP in the past and we continue to urge your support. The continuation of SNAP benefits for a recipient can mean the difference between having to decide whether someone's last amount of cash will go for food or rent or medications or other necessities.

In November 2025, the federal government shutdown stopped the provision of SNAP benefits to Hawaii's citizens. To prevent catastrophic outcomes for Hawaii's citizens, DHS, by Executive Order, established the Program separate from SNAP to provide a \$250 per person benefit for food and groceries at retail locations that accept Electronic Benefit Transfer cards. It is our understanding that this Program was funded by utilizing existing departmental resources to meet this emergency need. As such, the emergency appropriation requested in this bill would help to cover the shortfall caused by these efforts.

**Accordingly, the HPCA respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this measure.**

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@hawaiipca.net.