

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, April 1, 2026

10:03 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Videoconference

In Support

**House Bill No. 2310, HD1, SD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the
Department of Human Services**

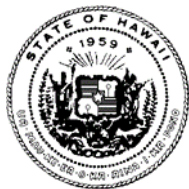
Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of the Governor **strongly supports** H.B. No. 2310, HD1, SD1, 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 SD1 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.

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 31, 2026

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

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2310 HD1 SD1 – MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.**

Hearing: April 1, 2026, Time 10:03 a.m.
Conference Room 221 & 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. Currently, DHS is considering the targeted population for premium assistance to be:

- Low-income Hawai'i residents enrolled in Silver Marketplace Plans who receive Advance Premium Tax Credits (APTC) and Cost-Sharing Reductions (CSR);
- Eligibility will be limited to individuals and families **at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)**, which in 2026 ranges from approximately **\$45,900** for a household of one to **\$111,200** for a household of five;
- The program is estimated to serve approximately **6,000 enrollees** in Silver CSR plans;

- The estimated cost to cover current enrollees is approximately **\$15,434,400**; and
- The additional **\$1,065,600** is to cover any **newly enrolled** individuals in the federal Marketplace during the plan year. New enrollments are permitted during a special enrollment period within 60 days of an individual losing existing insurance coverage (employer sponsored, Medicaid, etc.) or when an individual's household size changes through marriage, divorce, or the birth or adoption of a child, etc.

DHS respectfully requests that language be inserted in Sections 2 and 3 recognizing and authorizing:

- That an additional emergency appropriation of general funds is required to provide for health care premium assistance to Hawaii residents who purchase health insurance through the federal marketplace, and
- For the amount of \$30,748,126 be inserted in Section 3.

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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

SUPPORT FOR HB 2310 HD1 SD1: MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Hearing: Wednesday, April 1, 2026; 10:03 AM; CR 211 and Videoconference

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB 2310 HD1, SD1** 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.





Date: March 30th 2026

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

Subject: **HB 310 HB1 SB1 (Making an Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Services)**

Aloha,

As a member of the Hawai'i Food + team, I am writing in strong support of House Bill 2310. HB2310 makes an emergency appropriation to the Department of Human Services to restore state funds that were redirected to provide emergency food assistance during the 2025 federal government shutdown. The government shutdown that occurred from October 2025 until November 2025 imposed serious threats to Hawai'i's food security, Hawai'i's food assistance system, and the Department of Human Services (DHS).

During the government shutdown, federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) was cut off. Thousands of residents in Hawai'i rely on SNAP to meet their basic food needs. When funding was disrupted, the State of Hawai'i stepped in to fund SNAP to make sure people who rely on SNAP were still fed. Although this was the right decision, it came at a large cost to the State of Hawai'i. The state used funds that were meant for the Department of Human Services. To keep families fed, many budget shortfalls were created within DHS. DHS services include, but are not limited to, financial assistance, food security, healthcare, child care, and social services. There are services that are now short on funding due to the cut in federal funding for SNAP.

The amended bill changed the fixed amount of funding given to the DHS. The bill was changed to have a flexible language when regarding finances and money owed. This change ensures that the State can fully meet actual expenses incurred, rather than being limited by a fixed amount. This flexibility is essential in emergency response situations where costs may fluctuate. This also strengthens fiscal transparency and accountability by clearly linking the appropriation to documented emergency expenditures. It ensures that DHS can stabilize its programs and avoid long-term impacts on other critical services that were temporarily underfunded.

This bill would stabilize services which are especially important to Hawai'i's high cost of living and geographic isolation, which make residents particularly vulnerable to disruptions in food supply and income.

Mahalo,

Carlin McFadden & the Food+ Policy Team

#fixourfoodsystem

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.



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 Ways and Means
Re: **HB2310 HD1 SD1 – Making an Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Service**
Hawaii State Capitol & Via Videoconference
April 1, 2026; 10:03 AM

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, I am writing in **SUPPORT of HB2310 HD1 SD1**, 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.¹

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.²

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

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

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



LATE

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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 30, 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 2310 HD1 SD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the
Department of Human Services

Hrg: April 1, 2026, at 10:03 AM, Conference Room 211

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)¹ and the Healthy Eating, Active Living² (HEAL) Coalition **supports HB 2310 HD1 SD1**, 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.

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

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



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'.

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy



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

LATE

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

DATE: April 1, 2026
TIME: 10:03am

RE: HB2310 HD1 SD1 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.



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Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*

Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*

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

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.

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.



MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA

LATE

March 31, 2026

Subject: Hawai'i Foodbank in Support of HB2310 HD1 SD1

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I express our support for HB2310 HD1 SD1, Making an Emergency Appropriation to the Department of Human Services (DHS). This bill provides an emergency appropriation to DHS to replace general fund appropriations redirected to provide emergency food assistance during the 2025 federal government shutdown.

Food insecurity is a growing crisis in Hawai'i, with one in three households—including 100,000 children—struggling to access adequate food. One in five households have individuals who are skipping meals or going whole days without eating on a regular basis.

At Hawai'i Foodbank, we have seen first-hand the challenges that our food-insecure neighbors face on a daily basis, trying to put food on the table for their families and ensure their keiki and kūpuna have enough healthy food to eat. DHS provides crucial support to families facing food insecurity and other hardships. It is critical that DHS remains fully funded as we work together as a community to ensure no one in Hawai'i goes hungry.

With aloha,

Amy Miller

President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank