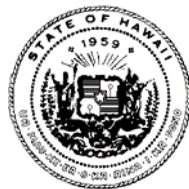


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



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 7, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 3245 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Hearing: April 8, 2026, Time 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and provides comments.

This bill requires DHS to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP). Participation shall include the following:

- (1) Establishing recertification periods of at least thirty-six months for households composed entirely of adults sixty years of age or older or adults with disabilities; and
- (2) Waiving the recertification interview for eligibility households, to extent allowed by federal law.

The Department appreciates the HD1 amendment that maintains the effective implementation date to July 1, 2028, as this will give DHS time to focus efforts to lowering the payment error rate, adjust to the new Benefit Eligibility Solution system (BES), and assess the

impact, if any, of mandated changes of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), Public Law 119-21, signed July 4, 2025.

Amongst other things, OBBBA changed fiscal requirements and expanded the population of SNAP recipients from ages 18-54 to (OBBBA) 18-64 required to comply with the SNAP Able-Bodied Adults without Dependent Children (ABAWD) work requirements. DHS will need time to analyze the impacts the OBBBA changes have on other States with ESAP programs, and the potential resources needed by the Department to effectively implement ESAP.

As referenced above, in addition to implementing SNAP changes required by OBBBA, DHS is currently testing its replacement eligibility BES system, with piloting scheduled for October 2026, followed by a statewide rollout in February 2027. Once operational, BES will be able to support the option granted to states to extend the certification period for SNAP households aged sixty years or older from twelve (12) months to twenty-four (24) months without a waiver.

For the committee’s information, beginning in federal fiscal year 2028 and continuing annually, OBBBA authorized a new cost-share model for SNAP benefits tied to payment error rates. Currently, the SNAP benefit is 100% federally funded and the OBBBA cost-share will require states to pay a percentage of the SNAP benefit. Specifically, states with a payment error rate of 6% or higher, based on their payment error rate from either federal fiscal year 2025 or 2026 (states choose which year's error rate to use as the baseline), will be required to state-fund a percentage of total SNAP benefits.

Hawaii currently issues roughly \$660 million in SNAP benefits annually. Using this annual amount as an estimate, the 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

For the federal fiscal year 2024, DHS had a payment error rate of 6.68%. This is the most recent official and final federal fiscal year error rate published by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food & Nutrition Services. DHS achieved this by streamlining and solidifying certain processes, thereby stabilizing the overall eligibility process. Although we continue to work to lower the payment error rate, some OBBBA changes took effect on July 4, 2025, the date OBBBA was signed, and we anticipate payment errors. Understanding the financial magnitude a high error rate would have for the State, the Department will continue to prioritize lowering our payment error rate as our top on-going priority for SNAP.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SIERRA WHITESIDE
CHAIRPERSON

DAINTRY BARTOLDUS
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
'A'UNIKE MOKU'ĀPUNI NO KA NĀ KĀWAI KULA
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

April 8, 2026

The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Todd and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SB3245 SD1 HD1 Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) offers **SUPPORT for SB3245 SD1 HD1**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature. Implementation effective 7/1/2028. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

This measure promotes stability for individuals with disabilities, aging caregivers, and households on fixed incomes who may have trouble with frequent recertification, paperwork, and interviews. Longer certification periods and simplified processes help reduce benefit disruptions, prevent loss of benefits due to administrative barriers, and support consistent access to nutrition.

This bill aligns with Hawai'i's efforts to bridge aging and disability systems, as many households include both aging caregivers and individuals with disabilities who rely on stable food assistance to remain healthy and independent.

Especially during March for Meals Month, this measure reinforces the importance of nutrition and community supports. Programs like Lanakila Pacific Meals on Wheels provide both nourishment connection, and stable SNAP access complements these services. From a systems perspective, this bill improves access and administrative efficiency while requiring data reporting to better understand participation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting SB 3245 SD1 HD1.

Sincerely,

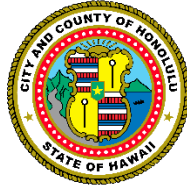
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY
KE KE'ENA LOLI ANIAU MĀLAMA 'ĀINA A ME KE OLA LOA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11th FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-2277 • EMAIL: resilientoahu@honolulu.gov • WEBSITE: resilientoahu.org

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



KEALOHA FOX, Ph. D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
PO'O HO'OKŌ & KAHU OLA LOA

VACANT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR &
DEPUTY CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER
HOPE PO'O & HOPE KAHU OLA LOA

TESTIMONY OF KEALOHA FOX, PH.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND
RESILIENCY AND CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 2:00 PM
Conference RM 308 and Via Videoconference

TO: Rep. Todd Chris, Chair, Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and Members of the
Committee on Finance

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 3245, SD1, HD1, RELATING TO THE
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The City and County of Honolulu's ("City") Office of Climate Change, Sustainability, and Resiliency ("Resilience Office") **supports** Senate Bill 3245 SD1, HD1, which would extend minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households and require the Department of Human Services to participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project.

Food security is a cornerstone of community resilience. On O'ahu, more than one in four households experience food insecurity, and over one-third of residents live below the Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) threshold, reflecting the growing gap between wages and the cost of basic necessities. These pressures are intensified by climate-related disruptions, including extreme heat, rising food prices, and supply chain vulnerabilities, which disproportionately impact kūpuna, people with disabilities, and low-income households. Reliable access to nutritious food improves public health outcomes, reduces emergency response needs during climate shocks, and strengthens household capacity to withstand rising costs associated with climate change.

This measure reduces unnecessary administrative barriers that may prevent eligible individuals and families from maintaining their SNAP benefits. Extending certification periods and simplifying recertification for vulnerable populations will reduce the risk of benefit interruptions and help ensure more consistent access to nutrition and improve stability for households already facing compounding economic and climate stresses. This complements City efforts to build a more resilient local food system, reduce disparities in health and economic outcomes, and supports aging in place for kūpuna.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of SB3245, SD1, HD1.



April 7, 2026

**Testimony in Support of S.B.3245 SD1 HD1
Relating to The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

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

Aloha United Way supports S.B. 3245 SD1 HD1, which establishes minimum certification periods and requires participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project.

In Hawai'i, approximately 40%¹ of households fall below the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) threshold. These are working families who earn above the federal poverty level but still struggle to afford basic necessities. When budgets are tight, food is often one of the first expenses reduced. For many households, SNAP is not optional, rather it is essential economic infrastructure that ensures consistent access to nutrition and prevents more severe financial hardship.

This measure takes a practical and impactful step by setting minimum certification periods of twelve months for most households and twenty-four months for kūpuna households. Extending certification periods reduces unnecessary administrative churn for both participants and the Department of Human Services. Families who currently must navigate frequent paperwork, interviews, and recertifications just to maintain basic food support will benefit from a more stable and predictable process.

Participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project is especially important. Establishing recertification periods of at least thirty-six months and waiving interviews for eligible older adults and individuals with disabilities recognizes the realities of fixed incomes, mobility challenges, and health concerns. These changes promote dignity, reduce barriers to access, and help ensure that those who qualify remain connected to benefits without interruption.

Streamlining SNAP administration not only supports households but also improves efficiency within the

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

Department of Human Services. Reducing administrative burden allows staff to focus resources where they are most needed while minimizing disruptions caused by missed deadlines or complex procedural requirements.

When households can rely on stable food assistance, they are better able to remain housed, maintain employment, and support their overall health and well-being. This bill represents a cost-effective investment in Hawai'i's social safety net and strengthens support for our most vulnerable residents.

Aloha United Way respectfully urges your support for this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Michelle Bartell
President & CEO
Aloha United Way



PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || www.agstewardshiphawaii.org

April 6, 2026

Aloha e Chair Todds, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

Re: **SB3245 HD1, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

On behalf of **Agriculture Stewardship Hawaii**, we support **SB3245 HD1** which would adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households, enable participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP), and require reporting to the Legislature.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawaii leads the **Statewide Food Systems Coordination Initiative (HSFSC)**, launched in 2024 with philanthropic and gubernatorial support. HSFSC works to align agricultural stakeholders, address infrastructure barriers, secure federal resources, advance institutional procurement of local food, and support policy priorities that strengthen Hawaii's food system.

SB 3245 aligns with these goals by directly addressing Hawaii's food insecurity crisis, helping families maintain consistent access to healthy food, easing administrative burdens for participants and staff, and supporting a stronger, more resilient local food system through reduced disruptions in SNAP benefits.

As of 2024, **23 other states** have implemented ESAP, with more planning to follow. Hawaii has an opportunity to join this growing cohort, providing meaningful relief to both SNAP participants and staff, while supporting food security statewide. We respectfully urge the Committee to support SB 3245, H.D.1, as a practical and impactful measure to strengthen Hawaii's safety net and food system.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Shaw'.

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator
Email: amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org, Tel: 808 429 5310



2026 Network Members

Aloha Harvest
Aloha United Way
Chef Hui
City and County of Honolulu
County of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA)
Hawai'i Appleseed
Hawai'i Children's Action Network
Hawai'i Dept. of Agriculture
Hawai'i Dept. of Health
Hawai'i Food Bank
Hawai'i Food Bank - Kaua'i Branch
Hawai'i Good Food Alliance
Hawai'i Public Health Institute
Kōkua Kalihi Valley
Lanakila Pacific
Mālama Kaua'i
Maui Department of Agriculture
Maui Food Bank
Parents and Children Together
Supersistence
The Food Basket
The Pantry, by Feeding Hawai'i Together
Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

hawaiihungeraction.org

House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 2:00PM

RE: Support for SB 3245, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Hunger Action Network, a coalition of more than twenty local organizations with the mission to advocate for food security for Hawai'i households, would like to express strong support for **SB 3245**. This bill would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to extend minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP).

SNAP is a critical lifeline for around 160,000 Hawai'i residents, supporting working families, individuals with disabilities, and others living on fixed or limited incomes. Yet food insecurity remains widespread, with 1 in 3 Hawai'i residents struggling due to the state's high cost of living.

One issue our network members report is that the frequent need to recertify can result in some families losing benefits, even when they still qualify. Extending certification periods to the maximum allowable by federal law could alleviate the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff workers. This bill would extend the certification period up to 36 months for kūpuna and people with disabilities—an opportunity to reduce the risk of losing benefits due to paperwork issues. Following suit of 25 other states, implementing ESAP would also simplify the process by allowing kūpuna to waive recertification interviews.¹

Mahalo for your leadership and for your consideration of **SB 3245**. Extending SNAP certification periods will be a tremendous relief for struggling families as well as eligibility staff.

Hawai'i Hunger Action Network membership

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, "SNAP State Options Report," Food and Nutrition Service, 2025, p. 28.
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-stateOptionsReport-17edition-120925.pdf>



HIPHI Board

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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 6, 2026

To: Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Re: Support for SB 3245 SD1 HD1, Relating To The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Hrg: Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 2:00 PM, Conference Room 308

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)¹ and the Healthy Eating, Active Living² (HEAL) coalition is in **support of SB 3245 SD1 HD1**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for households, and would participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project.

One in three households in Hawai'i faces food insecurity. Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are a lifeline to many of these residents. Local families in need receive over \$600 million annually in SNAP benefits. Unfortunately, the state has made accessing these benefits incredibly difficult. The state needs to improve the enrollment process and ensure local SNAP-eligible residents can receive the federal benefits they need.

Short Certification Periods

Residents in Hawai'i face frequent SNAP recertification requirements, with some needing to re-certify as often as every six months. Kūpuna (60 years and over) are required to recertify annually, even though federal regulations permit them to do so only once every three years.³

Hawai'i has the opportunity to extend SNAP certification periods to the federal maximum for all recipients. This change would significantly reduce the paperwork burden on families and kūpuna, easing stress and administrative challenges.

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

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

³ USDA - SNAP State Options Report.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/waivers/state-options-report>



Importantly, it would also reduce the risk of losing benefits during the recertification process, a common issue caused by paperwork difficulties and bureaucratic barriers. By adopting this policy, Hawai'i can ensure more consistent access to essential food assistance for its residents.

Decreased Workload for SNAP Staff

Hawai'i's SNAP department faces overwhelming demand for its services, yet it lacks sufficient staffing to meet that demand effectively. By reducing the frequency of recertification, the department can significantly decrease its administrative workload.

This would free up valuable resources and allow staff to focus on improving the overall efficiency and accessibility of both the SNAP application and recertification processes. Streamlining these operations would benefit not only the department but also the thousands of residents who rely on SNAP for essential food assistance.

Extended Certifications can be Implemented with New Benefits Eligibility System This Fall

We are excited for the new eligibility system to launch this fall which can accommodate extending certification periods. This will streamline the process for both DHS staff and the SNAP applicants.

Please extend the SNAP certification periods to ensure we're doing everything we can to make SNAP as accessible as possible. Mahalo for your consideration.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Hix", written in a cursive style.

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

Apr 8, 2026

MISSION

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) dedicated to providing independent living programs and services for persons with disabilities in Hawaii.

We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roxanne U. Bolden

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Scott Suzuki
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The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: SB3245 SD1 HD1 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) respectfully submits testimony **in support of SB3245 SD1 HD1.**

SB3245 SD1 HD1 requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households, participate in the federal Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature. Extending certification periods and simplifying application and recertification processes will particularly benefit older adults and many disabled individuals who rely on SNAP to remain in the community.

As a Center for Independent Living, AILH serves cross-disability consumers statewide, including many who experience food insecurity and face significant barriers to completing complex benefit applications and frequent recertifications. For people with disabilities, especially those with limited transportation, fluctuating health, or cognitive and psychiatric disabilities, repeated paperwork and appointments can become de facto barriers to maintaining benefits, even when they remain eligible. When SNAP benefits lapse due to administrative complexity rather than eligibility, consumers are at higher risk of hospitalization, institutionalization, or homelessness, all of which are more costly to the State.



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

MISSION

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) dedicated to providing independent living programs and services for persons with disabilities in Hawaii.

We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roxanne U. Bolden

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair / Sec

Valerie Yamada

Vice Chair

Zora Shove

Treasurer

Jonathan Yap

Member

Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
Jennifer Hartssock

Particularly in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and using longer, appropriate certification periods, are pragmatic tools that reduce unnecessary administrative churn while supporting stable nutrition for people with fixed or low incomes. This aligns with Independent Living principles by supporting people to remain in their own homes with adequate food, rather than being pushed toward more restrictive settings because basic needs are not met.

AILH respectfully encourages the Department, in implementing this measure, to:

- Ensure that simplified processes are accessible in multiple formats (online, paper, phone, and in-person) and available in plain language; and
- Engage community-based organizations, including Centers for Independent Living, in outreach so that older adults and disabled individuals understand and can benefit from the changes.

SB3245 SD1 HD1 will improve continuity of SNAP benefits and remove avoidable procedural barriers that disproportionately affect disabled and older residents. AILH respectfully urges the Committee on Finance to pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Roxanne Bolden
Executive Director



HAWAII APPLESEED
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB 3245 – Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 2:00PM

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **SB 3245**, which would require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP), and report to the Legislature.

SNAP is a critical lifeline for more than 160,000 Hawai‘i residents. Without it, many of these individuals would not have any money to pay for food at all. Since benefits are federally funded, federal rules require tedious paperwork and documentation both upon initial application and for periodic recertification.¹ Some SNAP users lose these crucial benefits during the recertification process, despite no changes to eligibility. This phenomenon, known as “churn,” adds significantly to the administrative burden of administering SNAP at the state level.

This bill would provide some relief for the churn issue. Federal rules allow states to extend the SNAP certification period to for households with seniors or people with disabilities. However, Hawai‘i currently requires recertification every 12 months for most households, with just a six-month “interim report.” Using the ESAP waiver, the recertification period can be up to 36 months. In addition to the three-year certification period, this waiver allows those who are 60+ to waive the recertification interview and allows for a simplified application process. As of 2024, 23 other states have already implemented ESAP and there are more to follow suit.²

The proposed extended certification periods for most households have twofold benefits, reducing workload for both applicants and eligibility staff. This bill provides a unique opportunity to ease the burden on both sides of the application process.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 3245. Thank you.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP Data Tables: National and/or State Level Monthly and/or Annual Data,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2024. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP State Options Report,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2024, p. 26. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-16th-state-options-report-june24.pdf>



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**The State Legislature
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, April 8, 2026
Conference Room 308, 2:00 p.m.**

TO: The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
FROM: Kealii Lopez, AARP State Director
RE: Support for S.B.3245, SD1, HD1 Relating to SNAP

Aloha Chair Todd and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social impact organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 135,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP Hawaii supports S.B. 3245, SD1, HD1 because it will significantly improve access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for older adults, a population that faces disproportionately high rates of food insecurity.

SNAP is the nation's largest anti-hunger program and currently supports more than 11 million adults ages 50 and older nationwide, providing essential monthly benefits that help low-income seniors afford nutritious food. Research from AARP shows that more than 9 million older adults experience food insecurity, making SNAP an especially critical resource for older populations.

For Hawai'i where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation, these national trends are even more pronounced. Many kūpuna rely on fixed incomes and face increased barriers to maintaining consistent access to food. Simplifying SNAP enrollment and reducing administrative burdens is one of the most effective ways to increase participation among eligible older adults. Simplifying application and recertification processes leads to higher enrollment among kūpuna, which directly reduces hunger and supports health and independence.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.



ALOHA CARE

To: The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Paula Arcena, External Affairs Sr. Vice President
Mike Nguyen, Sr. Director of External Affairs
Maria Rallojey, Public Policy Specialist

Hearing: Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 2:00 pm, Conference Room 308

RE: **SB3245 SD1 HD 1 Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB3245 SD1 HD1**. This measure would require the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit households and participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the legislature.

AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan founded by Hawai'i's Community Health Centers and the Queen Emma Clinics. We serve over 66,000 Medicaid and Medicaid-Medicare dual-eligible residents on all islands. Since 1994, AlohaCare has partnered with providers, government entities, and community-based organizations to meet the evolving needs of our safety net community as Hawai'i's only health plan focused solely on Medicaid-eligible individuals. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating for equitable access to quality, whole-person care for all.

AlohaCare is committed to ensuring whole-person care by addressing key social determinants of health like nutrition. We understand that food insecurity is a critical health issue and a key driver of health inequities. Food insecurity remains high among households receiving or seeking SNAP, particularly when benefits are denied¹. SNAP provides essential support to many families, but the application and recertification process can be complicated and often causes eligible recipients to lose their benefits. Extending the certification period for all recipients would reduce these barriers and ensure more people maintain their benefits. Participating in the Elderly Simplified Application Program would allow kūpuna to recertify only once every three years. As such, AlohaCare supports this measure because these changes would ease the burden on both applicants and SNAP staff, improving access to this vital program for everyone.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in **support of SB3245 SD1 HD1**.

¹ 75% food insecure for households who applied or received SNAP, and 83% food insecure for those denied SNAP. Hawai'i Food Bank, Hawai'i Foodbank Kaua'i, Maui Food Bank, The Food Basket. The State of Food Insecurity in Hawaii 2024-2025. 2025. https://hawaiifoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/HawaiiFoodbank_FoodInsecurityReport_2025-25.pdf

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 2:45:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB3245, a bill that modernizes Hawai‘i’s administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by extending certification periods for our kūpuna, streamlining the recertification process, and ensuring a smooth transition for individuals reentering the community from incarceration.

For the over 155,000 residents of Hawai‘i who rely on SNAP, this program is not just a benefit; it is a critical lifeline that ensures families can put food on the table. However, bureaucratic barriers often prevent eligible residents from accessing the nutrition they need.

Currently, many SNAP recipients—particularly our elderly and disabled residents—lose benefits during the recertification process due to paperwork burdens or mandatory interviews, even when their financial and medical circumstances have not changed. This "churn" disrupts access to nutritious food and creates unnecessary administrative costs.

By requiring the Department of Human Services to participate in the **Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)**, this bill would extend certification periods for qualified kūpuna and adults with disabilities to up to 36 months and waive the burdensome recertification interview. This allows our most vulnerable residents to maintain consistent access to food with dignity and less red tape. It is important to note that **25 other states have already implemented ESAP** and have seen success in reducing administrative burdens while maintaining program integrity. Hawai‘i should not lag behind in serving our kūpuna.

SB3245 is a smart, efficient, and humane update to our SNAP administration. It honors our kūpuna, and ensures that federal dollars are used effectively to fight hunger in our state.

I urge the Committee to pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 3:41:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 3:44:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

3245 SB RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 4:59:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

03/07/26

SB3245 SD1 HD1

Aloha kākou,

I know that this Bill would extend SNAP certification periods and require participation in the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP). I continue to be in strong support of this Bill, which is important to the quality of life for all, but especially for our kūpuna.

Aloha nui,

John A.H. Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Ku‘ula St., Kahului, HI 96733-2906

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 6:37:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Braun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Kathryn Braun, a long-time educator with the Hawaii state system, testifying as an individual.

I am writing to express strong support for Bill no., a pivotal piece of legislation that has the potential to improve SNAP access and ultimately strengthen our state's food security landscape.

SNAP is critical to the over 155,000 residents who receive benefits in Hawai'i. However, SNAP applicants face many barriers to applying for federal SNAP benefits. Some SNAP users lose crucial benefits during the recertification process, despite no changes to eligibility.

The Elderly Simplified Application Program (ESAP) extends the recertification period to every 3 years and allows kūpuna and adults with disabilities to waive recertification interviews. Twenty-five other states have already implemented ESAP. Let Hawaii be next!

Thank you - Kathryn Braun, Punchbowl

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:08:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am in **strong support of SB3245 DS1 HD1**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust minimum certification periods for SNAP households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

This bill is supported by countless government agencies and community organizations, as it will support food security throughout our State. At a time when we have some of the highest levels of food insecurity that Hawai'i has seen, **it is imperative that you pass this bill.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:23:49 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of SB3245 as I agree with extending the certification periods for SNAP and believe this is an ethical policy. Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 8:39:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Waters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Writing in strong support of this important bill that will support kupuna who rely on SNAP.
Mahalo.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 9:08:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Leake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Anne Leake and I am the President of Kaumakapili Church in Kalihi-Palama. For over 40 years we have had a food pantry to serve our surrounding community. Although you might think most of our clients already receive SNAP benefits, this is not the case for our elderly immigrant clients. Difficulty with the application process is a barrier.

I am writing to express strong support for SB3245, a pivotal piece of legislation that has the potential to improve SNAP access and ultimately strengthen our state's food security landscape. 25 other states have already implemented ESAP. This bill will strengthen SNAP because:

- SNAP is critical to the over 155,000 residents who receive benefits in Hawai'i.
- SNAP applicants face many barriers to applying for federal SNAP benefits.
- Some SNAP users lose crucial benefits during the recertification process, despite no changes to eligibility.
- Elderly Simplified Application Program (ESAP) extends the recertification period to every 3 years and allows kūpuna and adults with disabilities to waive recertification interviews. Mahalo for your leadership and for your consideration of Bill no.. This bill is essential to building a thriving, food-secure Hawai'i while strengthening one of our most essential safety nets.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 10:16:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support SB3245. SNAP is critical to the health and well-being of our community.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 2:00 pm
Via Videoconference and Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3245, SD1, HD1 - RELATING TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, Representative Miyake for my district on Maui, Rep. Yamashita of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews, and I live in Wailuku, Maui. I write to you today in **strong support of SB 3245, SD1, HD1**, which requires the Department of Human Services to adjust the minimum certification periods for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits households, participate in the Elderly Simplified Application Project, and report to the Legislature.

SNAP is critical to the over 155,000 residents who receive benefits in Hawai‘i.¹ Unfortunately, SNAP applicants face many barriers to applying for federal SNAP benefits and some SNAP users lose crucial benefits during the recertification process, despite no changes to eligibility. Senate Bill 3245, SD1 would help overcome some of these barriers for our elderly community members by implementing the Elderly Simplified Application Program (ESAP). ESAP is a SNAP demonstration project focused on households with adults aged 60 or older and people with disabilities. ESAP streamlines the application and certification process by simplifying the verification process, providing 36-month certifications, and waiving the recertification interview. ESAP serves households that do not have earned income and in which all adult members are aged 60 or older and/or have a disability. Twenty-five other states have already implemented ESAP.²

ESAP is a model program with documented benefits that would help provide food security for our vulnerable kūpuna. I respectfully request that you **vote in support of SB 3245, SD1, HD1**.

Mahalo for supporting our most vulnerable community members,

Christine Andrews
Wailuku, Maui

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP Data Tables: National and/or State Level Monthly and/or Annual Data,” 2025. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, “SNAP State Options Report,” Food and Nutrition Service, 2025, p. 28. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-stateOptionsReport-17edition-120925.pdf>

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/7/2026 12:59:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Extending SNAP certification periods for seniors makes good sense because it reduces administrative burdens on both elderly participants with fixed income and state agencies, while increasing program access, and decreasing unintentional loss of benefits. Importantly, this will result in ensuring continuous food security for seniors in need.

SB-3245-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/8/2026 1:55:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Denis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support** of **SB 3245, SD1, HD1**. This bill extends SNAP certification periods for kūpuna and adults with disabilities and waives the recertification interview for eligible households as part of the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP). Food insecurity is a pressing public health issue, impacting 1 in 3 households in Hawai‘i. Kūpuna and adults with disabilities live on fixed incomes and grapple with the increasing cost of living, making them vulnerable to food insecurity.

Food insecurity is associated with increased health care costs. This burdens Hawai‘i’s health care system, expends publicly-funded resources and insurance, and increases stress on our kūpuna, who already consume more health care than any other age group. It is therefore essential that the State ensures that eligible kūpuna can easily access food assistance programs to meet basic needs in the face of rising costs of living.

Additionally, many kūpuna have limited transportation access, decreased physical mobility, and experience difficulties navigating the recertification process. Establishing longer recertification periods and waiving recertification interview requirements will ease stress among kūpuna and reduce the likelihood of benefits lost during the recertification process.

By participating in ESAP alongside 25 other states, Hawai‘i will greatly increase access to vital food assistance among vulnerable populations and reduce administrative burden associated with short recertification periods and frequent processing of SNAP renewal applications.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of SB 3245, SD1, HD1.