

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 27, 2019

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

RE: SB 390, SD1 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Please accept this testimony in support of the Double Bucks initiative, SB 390, SD1.

On Hawai'i Island, the Food Basket and One Island (West Hawai'i) applied for, and were awarded, \$500K each for four years. The funding is for SNAP recipients to purchase local fruits and vegetables, thereby encouraging them to make healthier choices.

I'm told that the \$500K was for four years – total. The Food Basket is close to using up most of that grant.

In addition, there has been so much success with Double Bucks, the entire state now wants to start up this kind of program. For Hawai'i County, we need funding to continue and expand the initiative.

The 2018 Farm Bill increased funding for the federal grant program called the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive. There is \$250 million available over 5 years, starting this year. Other states that have appropriated matching funds have received this funding, so there is a strong chance Hawai'i would qualify for additional funds from this program if SB 390 passes. There is no limit, but national partners have suggested that \$1M is achievable.

Double Bucks is a win-win for SNAP recipients, farmers, markets, and our communities. We hope you will give it a favorable vote.

Respectfully Submitted,


Harry Kim
MAYOR