



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committees on Agriculture & Environment,  
Public Safety, Intergovernmental, & Military Affairs, and  
Higher Education

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By

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### SB 257 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chairs Gabbard, Nishihara, and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere, Wakai, and Kidani and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 257. This measure establishes a food security task force administered by the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center (NDPTC) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Social Sciences (College). NDPTC is authorized by the U.S. Congress to develop and deliver training courses on natural hazards and disaster response and recovery. It has developed FEMA certified training courses and has trained more than 30,000 emergency managers and first responders across 270 cities in the United States. The College and NDPTC strongly support study of food security in the state and the development of an emergency food plan.

- Hawai'i is exposed to multiple hazards and threats that could disrupt the transportation system and food supply.
- Hawai'i is the most isolated community in the world, with limited opportunities for mutual aid and assistance from neighboring jurisdictions, states, and other communities.
- With no railways or interstate highways connecting the state to the rest of the country, Hawai'i is dependent on shipping and air transport.
- Hawai'i has limited "shelf life" and food reserves.
- In the event of a catastrophic disaster, Hawai'i needs to have a plan for managing food shortages.

The NDPTC has begun work on the development of a food security training course including the preparation of a Food Emergency Response Plan. Because of unique conditions and challenges in Hawai'i, there is need to conduct background research, assess risks and vulnerabilities, identify capabilities and requirements, and develop appropriate plans and approaches to managing food security in Hawai'i.

If this initiative is fully funded by the legislature, NDPTC will work with the food security task force and with other key stakeholders and subject matter experts to develop an emergency food plan for the state and consider both short-term, immediate actions to be taken in the event of a food crisis and longer term approaches to building resilience and self-sufficiency in Hawai'i. However, NDPTC lacks resources to undertake the project within the existing UH budget.

The University of Hawai'i requests an appropriation of \$700,000 in order to cover the costs of staff and technical support of the task force, to conduct a planning process to develop an emergency food plan, and prepare both interim and final reports with findings and recommendations prior to the 2019 legislative session.

Fiscal year 2017-2018: \$450,000

- Form and staff taskforce, conduct initial research to assess risks/vulnerabilities/capabilities and requirements.
- Develop initial draft food emergency plan, prioritize actions, conduct initial review of findings and recommendations, draft initial report.

Fiscal year 2018 - 2019: \$250,000

- Seek review and comment on findings/draft report
- Identify roles and responsibilities and commitments of key agencies/organizations
- Complete final report of findings and recommendations for 2019 legislative session.

The University of Hawai'i support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Biennium Budget.