

Resolution 21-177 Testimony

MISC. COM. 460



August 10, 2021

To: Chair Waters
Vice Chair Kia'aina
Honolulu City Council

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for Resolution 21-177**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of Resolution 21-177, relating to the Kūpuna Food Security Coalition After Action Report. Blue Zones Project was brought to Hawai'i by HMSA to help increase overall well-being of our communities and to make Hawai'i a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play. To accomplish that goal, we work to lower rates of obesity, tobacco use, and chronic disease.

In Hawai'i and across the country, access to meals during the COVID-19 pandemic was especially challenging for older adults. In addition, enjoying healthy food offerings, including fresh fruits and vegetables, became a major financial and accessibility challenge preventing many low-income, underresourced, and socially isolated elders from incorporating these foods into their diets. We also know that diet-related diseases are disproportionately higher in low-income communities. Through both the USDA guidelines and multiple studies, fresh fruits and vegetables have extensive health benefits; fruits and vegetables supply dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals that function as antioxidants, phytoestrogens, and anti-inflammatory agents,^{1,2} and overall, not getting appropriate caloric intake through meals of any composition can lead to detrimental short- and long-term health outcomes.

The work of the Kūpuna Food Security Coalition was critical in immediately addressing on the food needs of older adults across the island. This collaboration also identified significant barriers to meals, community bright spots, local funding and food resources, and cross-sector allies that will help boost future food resiliency, both on O'ahu and across the state. The Kūpuna Food Security Coalition After Action Report thoughtfully documents the collective efforts of coalition members and lists additional policies and activities to further build capacity and improve public health.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support of Resolution 21-177.**

Sincerely,

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¹ Slavin, J. L. & Lloyd, B. (2012). Health benefits of fruits and vegetables. *Advanced Nutrition*, 3(4).

² USDA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. 7th ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; 2010.

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