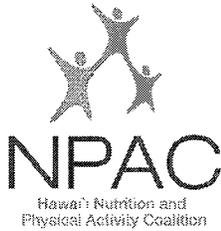


**SB2466**



To: Senate Health & Human Service Committees  
Date: February 1, 2010, 2:45 p.m. Conference Room 016 (State Capitol)  
Re: Support for SB2466, Making an Appropriation for the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program

My name is Jennifer Dang, State Director of the Hawaii Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition. My organization's mission is to look for ways to improve the health of Hawaii's people by changing or creating policies, systems and/or environments to encourage people to eat healthy, nourishing food and get daily physical activity and exercise.

As you know, over 2/3 of American adults and 30% of our children are overweight or obese. Unfortunately, overweight can lead to diabetes, hypertension and other chronic health diseases. Sadly, if childhood obesity continues at this rate, this generation of children will have shorter life expectancies than us, their parents AND our parents' generation.

Good health is largely determined by what we eat, and what we do. Unfortunately, obesity is found disproportionately in our Native Hawaiian and low-income populations. About 43% of our state's Hawaiian population is obese compared with 13.5% of our Japanese population. Looking at mortality data, Native Hawaiians have an average life expectancy of 71 years, more than 10 years less than Chinese, the group with the highest life expectancy.

That is why NPAC is strongly in favor of instituting the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program. There are 45 states, territories and Tribal Communities currently participating in the WIC FMNP, but Hawaii is not on the list although the territory of Guam is.

When I realized that Hawaii was not participating in the WIC FMNP, I contacted the Office of Community Services, since that office currently coordinates a similar USDOA program called Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program. We strongly believe that Hawaii needs to implement this WIC program as well.

The best food for infants is breast milk. Thereafter, mothers need to introduce their toddlers to a rainbow of colorful fresh fruits and vegetables. Thirdly, mothers need to offer their children water, and discourage introducing them to sugared drinks.

So you see, we believe the WIC FMNP is a very important program that when implemented, can help begin a generation of healthy eating all while supporting local farmers.

NPAC strongly supports this bill.

  
Jennifer Dang, State Director