

TESTIMONY OF Elisabeth Stenger, LCSW  
Appropriations Committee  
March 3, 2021

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Beth Stenger, I live in Hamden, and I support the Diaper Bank of Connecticut, which serves families throughout the state. I write to ask you to **restore funding** in the State budget **for The Diaper Bank of Connecticut**, which will allow the organization to continue the critical work of providing basic human needs to Connecticut's most vulnerable families.

Diapers are vital to the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of children and their families. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, diaper need impacted over 35,000 infants and toddlers in our state; one in three Connecticut families struggled to afford an adequate supply of diapers. We know the need for diapers has grown significantly since then, as more families have been pushed to the margins, and those in poverty have been increasingly impacted. The Diaper Bank served about 5,000 babies a month before the pandemic; the demand has risen to 6,500. Yet the funding is now slashed in half??

As a clinician providing home-based services for young families in the New Haven area, I saw how having (or not having) resources for adequate supply of diapers affected children's health and development, and the mental health of their mothers. A parent's ability to work typically depended on having diapers for daycare. Similarly period products, for working mothers and teen schoolgirls, are basic human needs that are required for the health, daily functioning and well-being of families.

I urge the members of the Appropriations Committee to support restoring state funding for The Diaper Bank of Connecticut, because all Connecticut families deserve access to these basic human needs.

Respectfully,

Elisabeth Stenger, LCSW

75 Ralston Ave  
Hamden, CT 06517  
203-915-3479