

TESTIMONY OF Nobuko Tahara

Appropriations Committee

March 3, 2021

[Good morning] Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is **Nobuko Tahara**, I live in **Derby**, and I am a Family Navigator of Intimate Partner Violence(IPV) – Family Assessment Intervention Response(FAIR) Program at Family Centered Services of Connecticut, which is a partner of The Diaper Bank of Connecticut serving families living in **New Haven County**. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning regarding my support for restoring funding 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 and marginalized families.

As a distribution partner of The Diaper Bank of Connecticut, I know that diapers are a basic human need for every baby and toddler. Diapers are vital to the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of children and their families. Prior to the pandemic, one in three Connecticut families struggled to afford an adequate supply of diapers; *now the need is at an all-time high.*

With restored funding, The Diaper Bank will be able to continue to provide diapers to Connecticut’s most vulnerable at a time when they are critically needed to individuals who are low income or financially struggling.

In partnership with the Diaper Bank of Connecticut, Family Centered Services of CT has been able to better serve our community. In my work role as a Family Navigator who serves the victims of intimate partner violence, I have seen the victims who were forced to flee from their homes to secure physical safety of themselves and their children. This forces them to immediately find a safe place to live and an employment to achieve financial independence away from their perpetrators, who are, more often than not, the fathers of their children. Domestic violence/intimate partner violence involves many different forms of abuse by intimate partners. Those abusive tactics are used to gain their partners' submission through power and control. One of such is financial abuse. This is often one of the biggest barriers and reasons why victims of DV/IPV cannot leave their abusive partners. By the time the violence becomes undeniable and escalating in degrees, victims are often isolated from their support networks through manipulation and harassment. Having to find and maintain their employment for living while being a sole caregiver to their young child(ren) is already difficult in anyone's eye. To force those caregivers to go without basic financial and/or material support from their community is just cruel and it is a form of societal victim blaming as it punishes the victims who chose to flee from violence.

Diapers, period products, and senior incontinence products are basic human needs that are required for the health 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.

Yours,

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