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Public Hearing Testimony before the
Connecticut General Assembly's Human Services Committee

**In support of House Bill 6937:
An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage for
Medically Necessary Children's Diapers**

Rhonda Evans, Executive Director
Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA)

February 26, 2025

Good morning Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest and honorable members of the Human Service Committee. My name is Rhonda Evans, and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA), the state association that works with Connecticut's Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federal designated anti-poverty agencies serving over 200,000 low-income people in all 169 cities and towns. More information about Community Action Agencies is included at the end of this testimony.

CAFCA supports this bill, which helps to ensure the health and wellbeing of children and families across Connecticut by expanding Medicaid to cover the cost of medically necessary infant and toddler diapers.

Diaper need is a hidden consequence for those struggling to make ends meet and truly impacts the people we serve. Diapers cost 8% of a person's total income if they earn the minimum wage, and a lack of diapers increases children's risk of infections, diaper rash, and other health problems. It also causes missed days at school and work, as many child care providers require parents and caregivers to provide diapers each day. Additional impacts are described below.

For infants and toddlers:

- Children's health and development will improve as diseases associated with infrequent diaper changing, such as urinary tract infections and diaper dermatitis, decrease.
- Children will miss fewer days of preschool due to diarrhea and other illnesses.
- Infants and toddlers will be better able to enroll in early education programs, increasing their school readiness and overall development.

For families:

- Parents will be more able to work and support their family because their children can now enroll in early education programs.
- Parents will miss fewer days of work due to children's illness.

- Fewer cases of urinary tract infections and diaper dermatitis reduce medical costs associated with such diseases, lightening the economic burden on families.
- Increased enrollment in early education will benefit child care businesses and the economic health of the community.
- Children will be better prepared to succeed in school and become economically contributing citizens.
- Reducing diaper need among Medicaid enrollees has the potential to reduce costs to Medicaid through reduced emergency department visits.

Diapers are a fundamental need for children and their families and expanding Medicaid to help cover the cost of this need will have a lasting and positive impact on our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to get in touch with any questions at rhonda@cafca.org or 860-305-2937.

More about Community Action Agencies

As the largest statewide safety net service provider, Connecticut's network of Community Action Agencies connects neighbors in need with resources that stabilize and improve lives and communities. These services and resources include, but are not limited to:

- Nutrition (inc. SNAP outreach, Meals on Wheels, and Congregate meals)
- Housing and shelter
- Asset development and financial literacy
- Energy and heating assistance
- Job training
- Early childhood care and education

Through a holistic, comprehensive, multigenerational approach, CAAs work with those in need to plan, achieve, and maintain a realistic path to short and long-term economic self-sufficiency and success.