



**H.B. No. 5032 (COMM): An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027.**

February 18, 2026

**Appropriations Committee**

**Mendi Blue Paca**

**President & CEO, Fairfield County's Community Foundation**

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Somers, Representative Nuccio, and esteemed Connecticut General Assembly members of the Appropriations Committee, [Fairfield County's Community Foundation](#) is grateful for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **funding for the diaper connections program in H.B. No. 5032 (COMM): An Act Adjusting the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027.**

[Fairfield County's Community Foundation](#) serves 23 towns and cities in Fairfield County. We work closely with community organizations, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropists to address challenges and identify opportunities to create a Fairfield County where everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive. Informed by three decades of partnering with and serving our community, we have been awarded over \$420 million in grants to nonprofits in Fairfield County and beyond.

As part of our commitment to improving health outcomes, the Community Foundation works to ensure that all Fairfield County residents have fair access to high-quality, culturally responsive physical, mental, and behavioral health care. We invest in efforts that address the social determinants of health and partner with community-based organizations that are deeply rooted in the communities they serve. One example is our Black Maternal Health Initiative, which focuses on reducing racial disparities in maternal health outcomes in Fairfield County. Over the past three years, we have invested nearly \$1 million in this work.

The Community Foundation strongly supports increasing funding for the Diaper Bank of Connecticut in support of Diaper Connections to ensure the health and well-being of children and families across Connecticut. In collaboration with the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA), Diaper Connections screens for diaper needs in hospitals and leverages local community partnerships to distribute diapers in settings such as maternity and pediatric clinics, emergency departments, labor and delivery units, and community/non-profit organizations. Beyond just providing diapers, Diaper Connections is advancing coordinated, statewide action to improve maternal and child health.

According to the Diaper Bank, more than 30% of families in Connecticut struggle to afford diapers for their children. Research shows that 46% of families facing diaper insecurity must cut other essential expenses to afford them. Limited access to diapers can have serious health consequences, including increased risks of urinary tract infections and diaper dermatitis due to infrequent changes. Ensuring that children have an adequate supply of diapers not only supports their health and development but can also lead to fewer preschool absences and as highlighted in the CT Health Foundation's recent report on Maternal Health Equity finds that providing diapers to individuals with low income can improve parent/caregiver mental health and ability to work.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of medically necessary diaper needs for Medicaid recipients. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Lutonya Russell-Humes, VP of Grants and Program, [russell-humes@fccfoundation.org](mailto:russell-humes@fccfoundation.org), or 203-750-3223.

Sincerely,

Mendi Blue Paca  
President & CEO