



## H.B. 5486 AN ACT CONCERNING A DIAPER PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

March 10, 2026

Human Services Committee

**Mendi Blue Paca**

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

Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, Senator Perillo, Representative Case and honorable members of the Human Services Committee, Fairfield County's Community Foundation is grateful for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **H.B. 5486 An Act Concerning a Diaper Partnership Grant Program**.

[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 **HB 5486**. The bill would establish a \$1 million grant program administered through the Department of Social Services to support diaper distribution through trusted community partners and hospitals, helping ensure that families with young children have access to an adequate supply of diapers. 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 supports their health and development and can also lead to fewer preschool absences. The CT Health Foundation's recent report, [Maternal Health Equity: A Blueprint for Connecticut](#), also finds that providing diapers to individuals with low income can improve parents' and caregivers' mental health and ability to work.

Addressing diaper insecurity also brings broader benefits for families' economic stability. Parents are better able to work and support their families because their children can enroll in early education programs that require an adequate diaper supply. With improved child health, parents miss fewer days of work due to illness. At the same time, fewer cases of urinary tract infections and diaper dermatitis reduce associated medical costs, helping to ease the financial burden on families.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 5486. 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