



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones
Before the Ways and Means Committee**

**In Support of HB711
Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Donations to Diaper Banks and Other Charitable
Entities
January 11, 2021, 1:30pm**

Chair Kaiser, Vice-Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I come before you today to introduce a bill that would help increase access to diapers, feminine hygiene products, and other desperately needed essential items for low-income individuals and families.

Currently, there is no national or statewide welfare program that can be used to purchase diapers or other essential hygiene products. “Diaper Need,” the lacking of sufficient diapers to keep infants dry, comfortable, and healthy, is experienced by 1 in 3 families here in the U.S.¹ This issue has only been exacerbated by the pandemic due to job loss and the prevalence of “panic buying” which has left shelves empty for many individuals who did not have the funds to purchase food, much less these items in bulk².

I saw the severity of this need first-hand through my experiences working with food distribution lines throughout my district. Diapers and other hygiene products were often the first to run out, and food banks and diaper pantries struggled to have the supply to keep up with demand. Just this past weekend, the food distribution in my district, at Tyler Heights Elementary served its 50 thousand families in need. A study conducted by the Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis found that the incidence of diaper rash decreased by one-third after families began receiving

¹ [What is Diaper Need?, The National Diaper Bank Network](#)

² [Families Across the U.S. Struggle to Afford Diapers, Wipes and Formula, \[New York Times, 07/29/2020\]](#)

clean diapers from the Diaper Bank of Connecticut.³ Given the extensive need for and the importance of these items, it is absolutely essential that we take action to help.

1 in 4 women suffer with 'Period Poverty', lacking the resources to purchase feminine hygiene products - the basic products required to manage their menstrual health. This often results in missed school, work, and frankly a lack of dignity in daily life.⁴ No woman or girl should be held back because of lack of access to these essential products. Feminine hygiene products, along with diapers are the last donated item to food banks and homeless shelters. This is why I have included female hygienic products to this bill as we should work to make sure every Maryland woman and girl can manage her period with dignity.

HB711 would create a tax deduction of up-to \$1,000 for donations of diapers and other hygiene products for children or infants, as well as feminine hygiene products, to charitable entities. This deduction would be applicable on donated goods or cash designated for these items. This issue is one that transcends party lines which is why I have asked my Republican colleague, Senator George Edwards, to lead the bill in the Senate. I am also proud to have the endorsement of the Women's Caucus as well as numerous advocates on the national, state, and local level.

I am offering a simple amendment to change the department overseeing this program's implementation from the Department of Human Services to the Comptroller's office to stay consistent with other subtraction modifications.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on this bipartisan bill to help Maryland's most needy women and children get access to the supplies they so desperately need.

Delegate Dana Jones



³ [Better Health for Children and Increased Opportunities for Families: The social and economic impacts of the diaper bank of connecticut, Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis](#)

⁴ [Alliance for Period Supplies](#)