



Indivisible: Central Maryland

Susan Radke, Lead Advocate

Dsusan56@gmail.com

Liz Enagonio, Lead Advocate

lenagonio@icloud.com

TESTIMONY FOR SB0316

Sales and Use Tax – Diapers - Exemption

Bill Sponsors: Senators Elfreth, Lam, Beidle, Corderman, Feldman, Hettleman, Jackson, Klausmeier, Lee, Ready, Salling, Washington, West, and Young

Committee: Budget and Taxation

Organization Submitting: Indivisible Central Maryland

Person Submitting: Liz Enagonio, Lead Advocate

Position: FAVORABLE

My name is Liz Enagonio, representing both myself and Indivisible Central Maryland, a grassroots organization of constituents dedicated to protecting progressive and democratic values. **Indivisible Central Maryland strongly supports SB0316**, Sales and Use Tax-Diapers-Exemption.

According to The National Diaper Bank, one in three children experience lack of access to adequate diapers. Further, the Washington Post published a column in their business section on March 1, 2021 describing that the lack of diaper access has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. (“**Millions couldn’t afford diapers before the pandemic. Now, diaper banks can’t keep up.**”)

Children require at least 50 diaper changes per week, or 200 diaper changes per month. By reducing the sales tax, families can buy 2 additional diapers for every percentage point reduction in the sales tax for the same money they would have used to buy 200 diapers with tax. (Data from National Diaper Bank; <https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org>). At the Maryland sales tax rate of 6%, a family will spend about \$66 per year on tax, enough to buy another case or two of diapers if they were no longer taxed.

Since sales tax is a regressive tax, the burden is felt most deeply by low-income families. Unfortunately, many families require assistance from charity diaper banks. If a diaper bank is not accessible, the caregivers may be forced to change the child’s diaper less often. This can have an array of negative consequences, including diaper rash, and urinary tract or genital infections. Since many of these same low-income families have limited or no health coverage, the child may end up suffering until the problem requires an emergency room visit, which costs

the state and tax payers more money. As well, children with diaper need are less likely to be accepted at day care centers.

If there is a need to offset the loss of tax income from removing the tax on diapers, it would be more just to make up the shortfall with a progressive tax that minimizes the burden on less wealthy families. For reasons of fairness and child well-being, Indivisible Central Maryland strongly **SUPPORTS SB0316**. Thank you.

Liz Enagonio, Lead Advocate, on behalf of Indivisible Central Maryland