

Hygiene Assistance for Families of Infants and Toddlers Act of 2016

Senators Al Franken and Robert P. Casey Jr.

Problem: Due to the high cost of diapers and related supplies, many families struggle to afford diapers for their infant or toddler. In fact, 1 in 3 American families experience diaper need, which means they do not have enough diapers to keep their infant or toddler, clean, dry, and healthy.¹ Research shows that this unmet need affects the health of the child, and can cause significant stress and mental health issues for the family.

In order for parents and guardians to safely care for their child, or enroll a toddler or infant in a day care program while they work, they must have diapers and supplies. Without access to affordable diapers, many families cannot work or pursue job opportunities, and their children face illnesses that are otherwise preventable.

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The bill provides funding for states, local governments, Indian tribes, and other nonprofit organizations to develop demonstration programs that help provide diapers to low-income families with infants and toddlers. To participate in the demonstration program, applicants must submit a plan to the Department of Health and Human Services that outlines how it will deliver the diaper benefit, evaluate the program, and report on its success. Applicants will have flexibility in determining how they will administer the diaper benefit—including voucher cards, distribution centers, or child care programs. This legislation is based on a bill introduced by Congressman Keith Ellison in the House of Representatives and a measure that was included in the President's FY2017 budget.

This bill authorizes an appropriation of \$75,000,000 for the years 2017 to 2021. States and other eligible entities must use the funds to provide diapers to eligible families.

If you have additional questions, or would like to cosponsor, please contact: Beth Wikler in Senator Franken's office (beth_wikler@franken.senate.gov).

Endorsers: National Diaper Bank Network, First Focus Campaign for Children, National Women's Law Center, Zero to Three, The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, The American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund, The Minnesota Head Start Association, The Family Partnership, New Horizon Academy, Greater Twin Cities United Way, Think Small, People Serving People, Minnesota Child Care Association, Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, Way to Grow, Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul, Catholic Charities Northside Child Development Center, Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children, and Child Care Aware of Minnesota.

¹ National Diaper Bank Network