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Hayes, Blumenthal Join Nonprofits to Launch Diaper Program

New Britain, CT - Congresswoman Jahana Hayes and Senator Richard Blumenthal voiced their support at a press conference today at the Human Resources Agency of New Britain's Food and Resource Center for a new federal program that provides diapers to families in need across the state.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Diaper Distribution Demonstration and Research Pilot Program (DDDPP) expands existing diaper distribution programs, increases accessibility to diapers, and connects program participants to other support services like Head Start, employment and training, housing, food, and more.

“Programs and initiatives like this are critically important to making sure that parents stay engaged, that they are able to go to work, and that they don’t have to worry about things as simple as putting diapers on their children,” said Hayes. “Children and families are the next generation, they’re the future. And I’m so excited we were able to get federal dollars into a program like this.”

The Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) will implement the program with support from other partners. This is the first time federal funds are being used for diaper assistance. Because the program is a research pilot, CAFCA hopes it will ultimately make the case for sustained funding moving forward.

“When you think about it, what is more fundamental to a child than a clean diaper? It’s a matter of health and happiness for babies, but also for parents. Diapers are expensive and for those who can’t afford them, they can restrain a family’s ability to earn, learn, and prosper. But here, diapers are a force multiplier, enabling families to get additional services. That’s the beauty and importance of this program,” said Blumenthal.

Diapers cost 8% of a person’s total income if they earn the minimum wage. A lack of diapers increases childrens’ risk of infections, diaper rash, and other health problems. It also causes missed days at school and work, as many child care providers require parents and caregivers to provide diapers each day.

“Across Connecticut, diaper need is a hidden consequence for those struggling to make ends meet,” said Rhonda Evans, CAFCA’s Executive Director. “This pilot program not only helps families meet the diaper needs of their babies and toddlers but opens the door for them to receive other essential, wraparound services that can improve their economic security, health, and well-being.”

CAFCA and its partners will distribute over 1.3 million in diapers and supplies and expect to serve 320 children.

To learn more about the program, families should visit www.cafca.org to find and contact their local Community Action Agency.

About CAFCA

The Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) is the state association for Connecticut’s nine Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federally designated antipoverty agencies serving all 169 cities and towns across the state. established by President Johnson to help fight the War on Poverty. Its mission is to support, strengthen, and promote the work of the Community Action Agencies statewide to advance economic, racial, and social justice. Learn more at www.cafca.org.

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