

## **Testimony in Support of HB 1798-FN**

### **AN ACT relative to the coverage of diapers under the state Medicaid plan**

My name is Dr. Christine Arsnow. I am a practicing pediatrician and president of the New Hampshire Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I am testifying in strong support of HB 1798-FN.

Access to an adequate supply of diapers is a basic health need for infants and young children. When families cannot afford enough diapers, children are at increased risk for diaper dermatitis, skin infections, urinary tract infections, and unnecessary medical visits. Diaper insecurity is also associated with increased parental stress, missed work or childcare, and poorer overall family stability.

In addition to my clinical experience, I am also the parent of three children and understand firsthand the significant and ongoing cost of diapers. For families living on very limited incomes, this unavoidable expense can force difficult tradeoffs that negatively affect child health and well-being.

Covering diapers under the Medicaid program is a practical, preventive investment. It supports healthy child development and may reduce downstream health care costs by preventing avoidable complications and medical visits. Providing diaper coverage aligns with Medicaid's mission to promote health, prevent illness, and support vulnerable children during critical periods of growth and development.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 1798-FN. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.