



To: Chair Wayne MacDonald, Vice Chair Lisa Mazur, and the House Health, Human Services, and Elderly Affairs Committee

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 1798 relative to the coverage of diapers under the state Medicaid plan

Date: January 14, 2026

Position: OUGHT TO PASS

Background

Reproductive Equity Now works across New England to make equitable access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care a reality for all people. Critical to this work is ensuring that every Granite Stater choosing to start or grow their family has access to the health care and material support they need so that they and their children can experience healthy outcomes.

By providing diapers to Medicaid-enrolled mothers during their newborns' first year of life, HB 1798 advances infant health while taking an important step toward ensuring that all mothers can parent with dignity.

HB 1798 supports infant health

Diapers are a basic need for infant wellbeing and healthy development. With diapers having nearly doubled in cost since the pandemic and nearly half of Americans with young children being unable to afford diapers, too many families are placed in the difficult position of choosing whether to purchase food or diapers for their newborns.¹ With increased access to diapers, moms can keep their babies clean and dry and decrease their child's risk of contracting diseases associated with infrequent diaper changing, such as urinary tract infections, hepatitis, and diaper dermatitis.²

HB 1798 supports moms participation in the workforce

Many moms are forced to miss work to care for their child when they cannot afford to supply their child care provider with diapers for their infant. In fact, 25% of parents with diaper need report having missed an average of five days of work or school in the previous month due to this problem. By providing diapers to Medicaid-enrolled mothers, New Hampshire can increase the ability of these moms to remain in the workforce and maintain economic stability for their newborn.³

¹ Hoda Emam, *Diapers are unaffordable for many families. Now states are looking to Medicaid for help.*, NBC News, (July 14, 2024, 7:00 AM)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-care/rising-costs-make-diapers-unaffordable-many-families-can-medicaid-help-rcna161209>.

² Fred Carstensen & Peter Gunther, *Better Health for Children and Increased Opportunities for Families: The Social and Economic Impacts of the Diaper Bank of Connecticut*, CT CTR. FOR ECON. ANALYSIS, (2022)

<https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/The-Social-and-Economic-Impacts-of-the-Diaper-Bank-of-Connecticut-1.pdf>.

³ NAT'L DIAPER BANK NETWORK, *New Hampshire Diaper Facts* (July 2025),

<https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/New-Hampshire.pdf>.

HB 1798 supports maternal mental health

Mothers who struggle to provide basic needs for their children due to financial hardship often experience adverse effects on their mental health. In fact, 79% of mothers with diaper insecurity experience stress or anxiety when they are unable to afford enough diapers for their children and 61% of mothers with diaper insecurity feel that their self-esteem is directly tied to their ability to provide financially for their children.⁴ Up to one in five women during or after pregnancy suffer from a maternal mental health disorder, including depression⁵ and specifically, one in five women in New Hampshire experience depression during or after pregnancy.⁶ By limiting the negative impact of diaper insecurity on maternal mental health, HB 1798 could build off the bipartisan progress achieved by last year's passage of Momnibus 2.0, a comprehensive maternal mental health package included in the state's Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget.⁷

Conclusion

New Hampshire must continue to implement measures so health care for moms and babies is accessible and affordable to all families. This must include ensuring that infants, regardless of family income, have access to the basic health care items and resources they need to have a healthy start to life. Through the passage of HB 1798, the Granite State can join Tennessee and Delaware, who have already implemented Medicaid coverage for diapers, as a national leader for infant health.

Reproductive Equity Now encourages your support of HB 1798 and is committed to working further with legislators, community leaders, and advocates towards its enactment. We thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony and urge you to vote favorably on this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Warriner Hamilton
New Hampshire State Director
Reproductive Equity Now
cwhamilton@reproequitynow.org

⁴ NAT'L DIAPER BANK NETWORK, *The NDBN Diaper Check 2024: Diaper Insecurity among U.S. Children and Families Insecurity Harms Maternal Mental Health in the Postpartum Period* (2025),

<https://nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org/the-ndbn-diaper-check-2024/>.

⁵ POL'Y CTR. MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH, *About Maternal Mental Health Disorders*,

<https://policycentermmh.org/mmh-disorders/> (last visited Jan. 14, 2026).

⁶ Shea Kelley & Carolyn Nyamasege, *State of Maternal Health New Hampshire* N.H. DEP'T HEALTH & HUM. SERVS. MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH, 38 (2023),

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt476/files/documents2/state-of-maternal-health-nh-feb-2024.pdf>.

⁷ See *Providing maternal depression screening for new mothers; increasing access to health care services for new mothers; enabling new parents to attend infant pediatric medical appointments; and developing a plan for perinatal peer support certification*, H.B. 346, 2025 Leg. Sess. (N.H.), enacted in H.B. 2, 2025 Leg. (N.H. 2025).