



February 5, 2024

House Ways and Means Committee  
Room 131, House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: HB 490 - SUPPORT**

Dear Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

I write to convey our support of H.B. 490 to support the critical work of diaper and period supply banks across Maryland. This legislation recognizes the economic importance of clean diapers to children and their families and menstrual supplies to women while incentivizing much-needed donations to organizations doing amazing work in their communities every day.

The National Diaper Bank Network supports the work of over 225 member diaper banks across all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico. The Alliance for Period Supplies supports over 120 period product banks across 37 states and Washington, D.C.

H.B. 490 would ensure that taxpayers continue to benefit from an existing tax deduction of up to \$1,000 for donations of diapers and other hygiene products for children or infants, as well as feminine hygiene products, to charitable entities. This deduction would remain applicable on donated goods or cash designated for these items.

Passing this legislation and encouraging further donations for these products would produce three important economic benefits. First, supporting increased donations through the continuation of this incentive would enable local organizations to continue their work to serve greater numbers of families in their communities. Research in Connecticut showed that for every \$10,000 of diaper assistance invested in local families, the total personal income of the families helped increased by \$114,000.

Second, [1 in 2 U.S. families](#) struggles to provide enough diapers to keep their baby clean, dry, and healthy. Most child care providers require families to provide a full day's worth of diapers when they drop their child off at the center. When parents are not able to provide the 5-10 diapers required, they are often forced to miss work. This costs the family a day's wages and the employer loses productivity - according to [The NDBN Diaper Check 2023](#), the 25% of caregivers who reported having to miss work or school because they didn't have enough diapers to drop their child off at daycare reported missing out on an average of 5.1 workdays over the past 30 days. Additionally, 2 in 5 women experience period poverty, a public health issue characterized by an inability to purchase enough feminine hygiene products due to lack of income.


Similarly, this lack of a basic necessity can force women to stay home from work or school, depressing their wages as well as micro-economic productivity.

Third, children need diapers and women need feminine hygiene products to stay healthy and avoid infection risks. Children go through six-12 diapers each day during the two to three years they wear diapers. Without enough diapers, infants and toddlers are at risk of skin infections, open sores, urinary tract infections, and other conditions that may require medical attention. Without tampons or other feminine hygiene products, women are unable to leave their homes or are forced to use rags, towels, or other less-sanitary options which can expose them to infection risks. Infections or other medical conditions resulting from a lack of these basic necessities are completely preventable. Increasing the resources to provide more of these products to communities in need will help prevent unnecessary medical costs.

We urge the House Ways and Means Committee to pass H.B. 490, a measure that is vital to supporting the critical work of diaper and period supply banks across the state while working to end period poverty and diaper need for children, families, and individuals in Maryland.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter. The National Diaper Bank Network and Alliance for Period Supplies stands ready to support and collaborate with you in any way possible to ensure the successful passage and implementation of this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lacey Gero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lacey Gero  
Director of Government Relations  
National Diaper Bank Network  
Alliance for Period Supplies