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BILL NO.: SB 52

TITLE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs – Waiver – Diapers and Menstrual Hygiene Products

SPONSOR: Senator Elfreth

COMMITTEE: Finance

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 2, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 52 – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs – Waiver – Diapers and Menstrual Hygiene Products. This legislation requires the Department of Human Services to apply for a waiver to allow benefits under certain programs to be used to purchase diapers and menstrual products.

Inflation has only added to the costs borne by low-income Maryland residents who already struggle to make their paychecks cover their own personal expenses. Individuals who require menstrual hygiene/childcare products feel these effects more acutely, as their standard cost of living remains higher and has increased sharply due to the inflationary effects of the pandemic. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides financial benefits to low-income residents who cannot cover their basic needs, however, essential healthcare items are excluded from list of products that benefits may be used for.

Senate Bill 52 would require the Department of Human Services to apply for a waiver to allow benefits under the SNAP and WIC programs to be used to purchase diapers and menstrual hygiene products. This would assist low-income residents throughout the State of Maryland in affording the critical healthcare products they need. SB 52 is more important than ever as the State continues to recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and help low-income residents get back on their feet.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 52. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.