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**CHA APPLAUDS HOUSE PASSAGE OF BILL TO STUDY MEDICAID COVERAGE
OF DIAPERS AND HEALTH-RELATED SOCIAL NEEDS**

WALLINGFORD – The **Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA)** applauds the Connecticut House of Representatives for passing [HB 6587](#), **An Act Concerning A Task Force To Study Medicaid Coverage Of Diapers And Other Health-Related Social Needs**. The bill now moves to the State Senate.

An [amendment](#) on the bill was introduced by **Representative Jillian Gilchrest (D-West Hartford)** and **Representative Jay Case (R-Torrington)** to establish a task force to study Medicaid coverage of health-related social needs to the maximum extent permissible under federal law. The task force would examine the potential benefits to Connecticut residents of expanding Medicaid coverage to address health needs derived from adverse social conditions that contribute to poor health and health disparities, including, but not limited to, diaper insecurity, food insecurity, housing instability or lack of reliable transportation.

“The establishment of this task force is an important step in a collaborative strategy to address social drivers of health through efforts to reimagine Medicaid to improve individual and community health,” said **Dr. Megan Smith, Senior Director of Community Health Transformation at CHA**.

“We are pleased to see that the task force will include representation from *Diaper Connections* – a diaper distribution network launched by CHA, Connecticut’s 27 acute care hospitals, and the Diaper Bank of Connecticut, with support from the Connecticut Department of Housing. This task force has the opportunity to build on the work under way at Connecticut hospitals and community organizations to improve the health of families, for example, by preventing adverse maternal and child health conditions associated with diaper need,” said **Smith**.

CHA, Connecticut hospitals, and community partners have advocated for the state to consider ways to enhance the utilization of Medicaid to address health-related social needs, including by providing Medicaid coverage for diapers to help struggling families obtain basic necessities to care for babies and young children.

Nearly one in three families struggle to afford diapers to keep their babies clean, dry, and healthy. Diaper insecurity is also associated with postpartum depressive symptoms and high rates of diaper rash for infants. In the first two months following the launch of Diaper Connections, diapers were provided to over 600 infants and toddlers.

The bill now heads to the State Senate. CHA will continue its advocacy and work with the bill’s Senate champions to ensure the successful passage of HB 6587. The legislative session ends on June 7, 2023.

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