



February 25, 2019

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Lipps, Ranking Member Rogers and members of the Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding House Bill 60. My name is Sarah Williams and I am the Executive Director of Hannah's Treasure Chest (HTC), an organization located in Dayton, Ohio committed to enriching the lives of children in need by providing care filled with basic need items such as clothing, books, toys, equipment, and personal care items including diapers. Hannah's Treasure Chest is a member of the National Diaper Bank Network, which has been actively raising awareness and addressing diaper need across the country. The National Diaper Bank supports a network of over two hundred active diaper banks which support diaper distribution programs located in nearly every state in the United States.

Diaper need, the experience of reducing household expenditures on other basic necessities such as food or utilities in order to purchase diapers, affects low-income families with small children. Every year HTC serves over 5,000 children each year, of which 75% are under the age of 5, lack these resources due to family financial struggles. Families experiencing diaper need struggle to maintain a supply of clean, dry diapers adequate for changing children's soiled diapers at recommended intervals to ensure the physical health and emotional well-being of children and their parents or guardians. Diaper age children need an average of 6 – 12 diapers per day, costing a family as much as \$125 every month. Currently, there are no government safety-net programs available that provide diapers and they are not seen as a basic need.

HB 60 may not seem like a huge impact for someone who is purchasing diapers, but this bill will allow many Ohio families to stretch their already stretched dollars that much further by being able to increase spending on other basic needs, utility bills, and medical bills; improvement of a



children's health and wellness; and improved attendance at childcare, work, and school. It will not only help struggling families, but it will also help those interested in supporting organizations like HTC who rely on donations of diapers to provide in the care packages created for the children served.

I would like to share two experiences from two of HTC's partnering organizations regarding the struggles of parents are caregivers and how HB 60 will make an impact on their lives moving forward.

Ms. D, was leaving a domestic violent relationship after her child's leg got broken. Because she was leaving the relationship, had never been on her own, and was frightened for her and her child's safety, HTC's partnering agency was assisting her. With very limited resources or support systems in place they also assisted Ms. D in moving into her own place. The case manager assisted her in signing up for OWF, WIC, and also made a referral to HTC for basic needs including clothes, diapers, books, car seat, pack n play and other child necessities. The diapers and other items allowed Ms. D. to leave a dangerous situation and maintain her own household until the other benefits began all giving her a great sense of pride and encouragement that she could protect and care for her child.

The second organization is working with college students who are either parents or have found themselves as a caregiver for a sibling or child relative. 1 in 4 of all undergraduate college students in the U.S. are student parents, with 11% of all undergraduate students raising children alone, and often without any monetary support, even from their families. These students not only have the responsibilities of attending classes, studying and working, as do their peers, they additionally have the responsibility of caring for their children and providing for their needs, which



adds more stress to an already stressful college career. Of course, this often means working more, studying less, and spending less time with their children and a lot of times, dropping out of college. When the immediate need of a parent or caregiver is removed they can better focus on the work that needs to be done, and the organization can meet our goal of helping them achieve their education.

These are the lives that HB 60 will make a difference for. These families and caregivers all throughout Ohio, deserve an opportunity to provide for the children in their care without this unnecessary financial tax burden and for Ohio to realize that diapers are a basic necessity for children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the committee. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.