

JAN 17 2020

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DIAPERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that a family's need for
2 diapers is not simply a material hardship, but a factor that can
3 actually contribute to the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty.
4 One in three families nationwide face challenges in acquiring
5 enough diapers to keep their children clean, dry, and healthy.
6 Infants can require up to twelve diapers a day and toddlers up
7 to eight. This can cost an average of approximately one
8 thousand dollars per year for the parent or caregiver, or as
9 much as fourteen per cent of the after tax income of a
10 struggling household.

11 The legislature further finds that more than half of the
12 parents identified as having a need for diapers have also missed
13 work or school because they were unable to take their children
14 to daycare due to the lack of diapers and diaper wipes. A
15 sufficient diaper supply offers valuable relief to families who
16 are already struggling to meet basic needs such as rent,
17 utilities, and food. This would enable them to better support



1 the overall healthy development of their child or children as
2 well. Furthermore, it can also help reduce the incidence of
3 maternal depression and stress.

4 The legislature further finds that the only federal
5 assistance that can be spent on diapers is the temporary
6 assistance to needy families program. Families use temporary
7 assistance to needy families to cover a wide range of
8 fundamental necessities. Often there is not enough left over to
9 also cover diapers.

10 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot diaper
11 benefit program for parents who participate in the first to work
12 program. The diaper benefit shall be used by the participant to
13 purchase diapers for the child. The diaper benefit shall be
14 issued to qualifying parents through an electronic benefits
15 transfer system. The diaper benefit shall not be considered
16 income for the purposes of determining eligibility for any other
17 public benefits.

18 SECTION 2. There is established a pilot diaper benefit
19 program within the first to work program administered by the
20 department of human services. A diaper benefit of fifty dollars
21 per month for each child aged thirty-six months or less shall be



1 paid to any parent who participates in the first to work
2 program.

3 SECTION 3. The department of human services may adopt
4 rules pursuant to chapter 91 necessary to carry out the purposes
5 of this Act.

6 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
8 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
9 the pilot diaper benefit program.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
11 human services for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Kal Hood

[Signature]

Rosely de Baker

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S.B. NO. 2351

Report Title:

Keiki Caucus; Human Services; Pilot Diaper Benefit Program

Description:

Establishes a pilot diaper benefit program for parents who participate in the first to work program administered by the department of human services.

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