



LIZ ORTEGA

Assemblymember, District 20



AB 636

FACT SHEET

Bill Summary

AB 636 would establish diapers as a covered Medi-Cal benefit for a child greater than 3 years of age who has been diagnosed with a condition that contributes to incontinence and for an individual under 21 years of age if necessary to correct or ameliorate a condition pursuant to certain federal standards.

Existing Law

Provides comprehensive screening and preventative healthcare services for children under the age of 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid through the federal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) program. [Section 51184 - EPSDT: Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 22]

Allows participants in CalWORKs to be eligible for a \$30 per month benefit to assist with diaper costs for each child under 36 months of age. [Section 11323.2 of the Welfare and Institutions Code]

Background

EPSDT is a federal program under Medicaid that has a long-standing policy which provides comprehensive screening and preventative healthcare services for children under the age of 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT is key to ensuring that children and adolescents receive appropriate preventive, dental, mental health, developmental, and specialty services. This would include medically necessary diapers

for all children on Medi-Cal under 21 years of age. However, the California Medi-Cal provider manual currently deems diapers “medically necessary” only if a child *over the age of five* has a medical condition that causes incontinence. A prescription is needed from a doctor indicating the diagnosis and the type of incontinence.

According to the National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN), California has one of the most restrictive state definitions of “medically necessary,” which was established by outdated case law. This restrictive definition under Medi-Cal leaves children under 5 unable to access prescription diapers when medically necessary.

Need for AB 636

According to NBDN, 47% of families in the United States reported not having enough diapers for their babies to stay clean without having to cut back on other basic necessities. The American Academy of Dermatology states that the inability to change a diaper once it is soiled causes painful conditions, like Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs), Diaper Dermatitis (an inflammatory reaction of the skin due to infections, friction from diapers, moisture from urine or feces), as well as serious mental health repercussions to both the parents and children, and behavioral problems.

Additionally, the inability to adequately diaper an infant or toddler has been found to increase rates of family hunger, lost wages when

parents are not able to place their children into child care, and maternal depression.

AB 636 will expand access to diapers for low-income families allowing children under the age of 5 covered under Medi-Cal to have access to prescription diapers when medically necessary.

Support

GRACE/End Child Poverty CA (co-sponsor)

California Association of Food Banks (co-sponsor)

National Diaper Bank Network (co-sponsor)

Central California Food Bank

FIND Food Bank

Food Bank for Humboldt County

Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

GLIDE Foundation

Help a Mother Out (HAMO)

Los Angeles Regional Food Bank

San Diego Food Bank

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County

Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz
County

Western Center on Law & Poverty

Opposition

None on file.

For More Information

Candice Riley, Senior Legislative Assistant

Office of Assemblymember Liz Ortega

916.319.2020

Candice.Riley@asm.ca.gov