SENATE RESOLUTION No. 55

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT
District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Designates first week in August as “Adult Diaper Need Awareness Week” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN SENATE RESOLUTION designating the first week of August as "Adult Diaper Need Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, Twenty-five million American adults suffer from various forms of incontinence; and

WHEREAS, Urinary incontinence, the loss of bladder control, is more common in older people, especially women; and

WHEREAS, The National Poll on Healthy Aging found that nearly half of women ages 50 and older report urine leakage, due to female-specific factors such as pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause but often do not tell their doctor; and

WHEREAS, Persons living with chronic illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, multiple sclerosis, or Parkinson's disease can also experience incontinence; and

WHEREAS, In addition, many persons with disabilities are obliged to wear diapers for a variety of reasons, incontinence and the inability to use a bathroom unaided among the most common; and

WHEREAS, The only way for older Americans, the disabled, and persons living with chronic illnesses to manage and lead as normal of a life as possible is through the use products that are specifically catered to managing incontinence, most notably adult diapers; and

WHEREAS, A person with a moderate amount of urine leakage may use two to four disposable diapers each day, at a cost averaging $80–$160 per month. However, if a person needs adult diapers for all their urinary needs, the cost can be between $200-$300 per month for adult briefs and other incontinence products; and

WHEREAS, Often, people dealing with incontinence problems are among those who have the fewest resources. Most of these people are older adults, many of whom may be living on limited incomes with limited buying power once medical expenses are factored in; and

WHEREAS, According to the Cornell University Online Resource for U.S. Disability Statistics, in 2009, an estimated 26.4 percent of the population with a disability between the ages of 21 and 64 had incomes below the poverty line; and

WHEREAS, Though the official census data gives seniors a 2020 poverty rate of 9.5 percent, the Supplemental Poverty Measure, which accounts for expenses such as the rising costs of health care and medical supplies, raises the American senior poverty rate to 20.4 percent; and

WHEREAS, Diaper need is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant, a toddler, or an adult with incontinence clean, dry, and healthy; and

WHEREAS, Adults managing incontinence who are living in poverty or who have limited incomes often lack access to adult diapers and other incontinence supplies; and

WHEREAS, Adults with incontinence who cannot afford diapers can end up isolated and embarrassed, worried about how they smell, or what might happen if a restroom is not nearby; and

WHEREAS, An inadequate supply of adult diapers or inferior incontinence products also pose many health risks, including rashes and urinary tract infections, and can lead to anxiety and depression; and

WHEREAS, Very few private health insurance plans cover the cost of adult diapers and other incontinence products; and

WHEREAS, Federal health insurance programs such as Medicaid and Medicare have varying procedures and requirements relating to insurance coverage for adult diapers and other incontinence products; and

WHEREAS, Adult diapers and other incontinence products must be medically necessary for Medicaid to cover the cost of their purchase. If not a medical necessity, a person may have to pay 100 percent of the cost out of pocket. In most states, Medicaid programs cover adult diapers, though the amount varies; and

WHEREAS, Medicare Part C, or Medicare Advantage, provides the same coverage as Medicare parts A and B, in conjunction with certain other benefits. Although most Medicare Advantage plans do not cover adult diapers, some offer coverage for over-the-counter supplies, which does include adult diapers; and

WHEREAS, Diapers banks are a resource for those who cannot afford to purchase needed incontinence products due to financial difficulties; and

WHEREAS, In many cases, adult diapers made available through diaper banks are free, though each group has specific policies about products, services, and distribution; and

WHEREAS, Most diaper banks collect products by collaborating with diaper partners, organizations, and individuals as well as through monetary donations; and

WHEREAS, The coronavirus 2019 disease (COVID-19) pandemic has contributed to economic adversity and revealed and worsened many long-standing societal issues; and

WHEREAS, Diaper banks that distribute adult diapers and other incontinence products report a surging demand, and have scrambled to find new ways to distribute these products as other agencies that serve older adults shut down or reduced their operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey recognizes that adult diaper need is a public health issue and by addressing the issue of, and raising public awareness about, adult diaper need, the citizens of the New Jersey can ensure that all adults suffering from incontinence will have access to clean diapers and other incontinence products required for daily living; now, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The first week in August shall be designated as "Adult Diaper Need Awareness Week" in the State of New Jersey in order to recognize that adult diaper need is a public health issue, raise awareness of adult diaper need, and ensure that all adults suffering from incontinence will have access to clean diapers and other incontinence products required for daily living.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a proclamation recognizing the first week in August as "Adult Diaper Need Awareness Week" in New Jersey and calling upon public officials, the citizens of the State, and other interested groups to observe the week with appropriate activities and programs.

STATEMENT

This resolution designates the first week in August as "Adult Diaper Need Awareness Week" in the State of New Jersey in order to recognize that adult diaper need is a public health issue, raise awareness of adult diaper need, and ensure that all adults suffering from incontinence will have access to clean diapers and other incontinence products required for daily living.

Twenty-five million American adults suffer from various forms of incontinence, and urinary incontinence, the loss of bladder control, is more common in older people, especially women.

Persons living with chronic illnesses such as Alzheimer's, disease, dementia, multiple sclerosis, or Parkinson's disease, and those who are disabled, can also experience incontinence.

The only way for older Americans, the disabled, and persons living with chronic illnesses to manage and lead as normal of a life as possible is through the use products that are specifically catered to managing incontinence, most notably adult diapers.

A person with a moderate amount of urine leakage may use two to four disposable diapers each day, at a cost averaging $80–$160 per month. However, if a person needs adult diapers for all their urinary needs, the cost can be between $200-$300 per month for adult briefs and other incontinence products.

Diaper need is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant, a toddler, or an adult with incontinence clean, dry, and healthy.

Often, people dealing with incontinence problems are among those who have the fewest resources, and adults managing incontinence who are living in poverty or who have limited incomes may not have access to adult diapers and other incontinence supplies.

An inadequate supply of adult diapers or inferior incontinence products poses many health risks, including rashes and urinary tract infections, and can lead to anxiety and depression.

Diapers banks are a resource for people who cannot afford to purchase needed incontinence products due to financial difficulties and, in many cases, adult diapers made available through diaper banks are free.

However, the fact that federal health insurance programs such as Medicaid and Medicare have varying procedures and requirements relating to insurance coverage for incontinence products, and the coronavirus 2019 disease (COVID-19) pandemic has amplified economic hardships, adults suffering with incontinence often lack access to adult diapers and other products that are essential for daily living.

Raising public awareness of adult diaper need will ensure that adults with incontinence will no longer struggle with inadequate supplies of adult diapers or inferior incontinence products and will be able to manage and lead as normal of a life as possible.