



May 20, 2020

Senator Jane Kitchell, Chair, Senate Appropriations;
Senate Appropriations Committee members

Representative Catherine Toll, Chair, House Appropriations;
House Appropriations Committee members

Re: Request for relief funding for increased demand due to COVID-19 crisis

Dear Senators and Representatives:

First, thank you so much for your hard work during this uncertain time. We appreciate your thoughtful response to this crisis -- there is a great spirit of togetherness right now and we are all feeling proud to call Vermont home.

We write today to request \$50,000 from the COVID-19 Relief Fund for the Junior League of Champlain Valley (JLCV) in support of its Diaper Bank. Due to COVID-19, the demand for, and our distribution of, diapers at no-cost has **increased tenfold in the last two months** in both the number of diapers given out and organizations served.

The JLCV Diaper Bank is the signature project of the Junior League of Champlain Valley, a 501(c)(3) organization, and is **entirely volunteer run and funded** through efforts of JLCV's dedicated members. Since its founding in 2018, the JLCV Diaper Bank has partnered with food shelves in Chittenden and Franklin Counties, distributing approximately 8,500 diapers per month, and 100,000 diapers annually.

Due to COVID-19, we have been **serving organizations in eleven counties**, and, incredibly, we have **distributed over 135,000 diapers since March**. Our operation is lean and, due to being entirely volunteer run, our expenses beyond basic supplies are minimal; any dollars allocated will go directly to Vermonters in need.

There is no federal or state government safety net available for families in need of diapers, and it can **cost over \$75 per month to diaper a child**. Before COVID-19, 1 in 3 U.S. families struggled

to provide enough diapers to keep their children clean, dry, and healthy. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted families who lack access to diapers and other basic necessities; **panic purchasing, job losses, and stay home orders have forced more families to turn to nonprofit diaper banks and food shelves.**

If awarded, **COVID-19 Relief Fund monies would allow the JLCV to further increase the Diaper Bank's capacity to serve at-risk Vermonters and sustain operations during this uncertain time.** We recognize that this is a one-time request to support the Diaper Bank's COVID-19 response through December 30. The requested money would fall into three categories:

1. Purchase of diapers to replace and bolster inventory - \$41,000. Through bulk buying programs, we are able to secure the lowest possible prices for diapers. In order to continue to assist Vermont through this crisis, we anticipate needing to purchase approximately 250,000 diapers, representing an approximate \$41,000 investment. While we've been fortunate to receive large donations from Seventh Generation and Huggies in recent years, including a supplemental donation from Seventh Generation during the COVID-19 pandemic, those donations alone will not support continued operation at the current level.

Without inventory replacement and enhancement, the JLCV will not be able to continue to meet broad community needs, and will need to scale back or cease operations sooner rather than later beyond our established partnerships with nine food shelves in Chittenden and Franklin counties. Exacerbating the impact of rapid utilization of our inventory, diaper drives in childcare centers and community spaces, which we typically rely on to boost our inventory, have ceased completely during this time, as have all but the most basic volunteer efforts.

2. Additional warehouse space - \$8,000. Our warehouse and repackaging space was stretched thin prior to the increased need for, and utilization of, the JLCV Diaper Bank. We anticipate having to rent additional space to properly store diapers in the quantity required for bulk buying, and to maintain the expanded operations needed to support Vermonters during this time. In the past, the Vermont Foodbank has generously donated warehouse space for excess inventory. However, we cannot rely on this generosity indefinitely, or in such a scope as would meet the demand we're seeing. Pricing for warehouse space, and accompanying storage logistics, represents \$8,000 of our total request.
3. Educate families in need - \$1,000. Ensuring that families struggling with diaper-need know where to find clean, dry diapers for their babies and toddlers outside of our previously existing network will require outreach and education. Additional funding would help us to more firmly establish the expanded distribution network that has

emerged and effectively communicate to the general public where free diapers can be obtained through expanded online information and messaging by our partners. Communication support represents \$1,000 of our total request.

We have included an appendix detailing our geographic distributions since March 1, 2020. To learn more about the JLCV Diaper Bank, please visit the “[Diaper Bank](#)” and “[News](#)” sections of our website (www.jlcv.org).

We appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Breslend (JLCV President)
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Amanda Herzberger (Diaper Bank Chair)
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CC: Senate President Tim Ashe
 Speaker of the House Mitzi Johnson

Diapers Distributed Since March 1, 2020

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>
Building Bright Futures Addison	1,550	Addison	Addison
Parent Child Center St. Johnsbury	1,000	St. Johnsbury	Caledonia
Aunt Dot's	2,860	Essex	Chittenden
Champlain Valley Head Start	3,668	Burlington	Chittenden
Essex Center/Jericho-Underhill Ecumenical Ministries (Partner)	3,346	Jericho	Chittenden
Feeding Chittenden (Partner)	25,612	Burlington	Chittenden
Hinesburg (Partner)	1,522	Hinesburg	Chittenden
Howard Center	2,532	Burlington	Chittenden
Janet S. Munt Family Room	13,683	Burlington	Chittenden
King Street	3,176	Burlington	Chittenden
Lund	18,621	Burlington	Chittenden
MFCC Emergency Food Shelf (Partner)	2,883	Milton	Chittenden

Richmond Food Shelf & Thrift Store (Partner)	1,233	Richmond	Chittenden
South Burlington Food Shelf (Partner)	1,470	South Burlington	Chittenden
Williston Community Food Shelf (Partner)	2,957	Williston	Chittenden
Winooski	1,713	Winooski	Chittenden
Franklin/Grand Isle Community Action (Partner)	952	St. Albans	Franklin
Parent Child Center NCSS	10,278	St. Albans	Franklin
Lamoille Family center	2,502	Morristown	Lamoille
Orange County PCC	2,930	Tunbridge	Orange
Building Bright Futures Newport	2,380	Newport	Orleans
Parent Child Center Newport	1,000	Newport	Orleans
Building Bright Futures Rutland	1,550	Rutland	Rutland
Vermont Food Bank	21,100	Barre	Washington
Brattleboro Family Room	2,487	Brattleboro	Windham
Sharon Food Shelf	2,139	Sharon	Windsor
TOTAL	135,144		