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**Gale A. Brewer, Borough President**

**June 19, 2018**

**Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Testimony Before the New York City Council  
Committees on Women and Governmental Operations**

My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. I would like to thank Chairs Rosenthal and Cabrera, as well as the members of both committees, for the opportunity to testify this afternoon in support of Int. 380 of 2018 in relation to the provision of diapers.

For the past two winters, my office has led a diaper drive in partnership with the Food Bank of New York City and the Girls Scouts of New York. Truly this is an unusual addition to the city's many holiday season donation drives, but fills a real need and we are proud to have distributed nearly 25,000 diapers this year at emergency food providers throughout the borough. Supplying diapers for free at these Food Bank partners helps relieve a major burden on parents and children.

As we all know, these families often rely on childcare services that require them to supply disposable diapers and wipes for their children. Without diapers, low-income working parents who use child care services can't go to work or school because the services require each parent to supply diapers – not to mention wipes - for their child. I support Int 380 and commend its primary sponsors Council Members Treyger, Ampy-Samuel, Rosenthal, Cumbo, Levin and Reynoso.

Yesterday the Center for New York City Affairs released a brief in trends that are re-shaping New York's Changing World of Child Care. It cites licensed group family child care as the fastest growing child care capacity for the city's infants and toddlers – could these sites be included in the legislation? I would like to suggest that this bill be expanded to include emergency food providers that serve families and have the capacity for distribution. Low-income working parents may receive SNAP and WIC (which they cannot use to purchase diapers and wipes) yet may not live in homeless shelters or have their children placed in the eligible child care centers.

At the beginning of this month, my office conducted a study in order to determine whether the soup kitchens and food pantries across Manhattan were in need of diapers. For the sites that currently distribute diapers, they depend on donations that are unreliable. Out of the 68 soup kitchens or food pantries that we spoke with, 35, or around 52%, of the programs expressed a

strong desire for a regular supply of diapers. While not all soup kitchens and food pantries have a client base or capacity for diaper distribution, it would be wrong to turn a blind eye on the programs for which a supply of diapers is just as imperative as food support, especially as their client families are challenged with this additional financial strain on households with very limited resources. Sites like The Hopeline's diaper distribution program in the Bronx - established by Executive Director Maria Cintron - should be reviewed and recommended as a best practice.

I want to thank the sponsors again for trying to ease the burden on low income and working families in our city.