



Legislative Testimony
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Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 121, An Act Concerning Access to Diaper Changing Stations in Public Buildings

Senator Bradley, Representative Horn, Ranking Member Champagne, Ranking Member Green, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

My name is Kelly McConney Moore, and I am the interim senior policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony to testify in support of Senate Bill 121, An Act Concerning Access to Diaper Changing Stations in Public Buildings.

We strongly encourage the committee to support Senate Bill 121. The ACLU-CT is an organization that defends and promotes gender equality. This issue highlights our core belief that parents and caregivers, regardless of gender, should be afforded the same opportunities to care for children, with the same public accommodations. This bill ensures that all people, regardless of the restrooms they use, will have the ability to care for and clean a child in their care in a safe and hygienic environment. No longer will women be tasked with the sole responsibility and, importantly, the sole ability to consistently be able to change their child's diaper in a Connecticut public building. This disparity creates a near-impossible situation for single fathers, same-sex male parents, and other male-identified caregivers: one where they enter a public building and know it is unlikely that they will be able to hygienically change a diaper. State buildings which fail to provide diaper changing stations in men's bathrooms also put women caregivers at a disadvantage. Mothers in heterosexual relationships are already responsible for a disproportionate share of

parenting responsibilities.¹ By denying male caregivers the ability to care for a child by changing its diaper, the State retrenches gender norms and unequal responsibilities.² In passing this bill, Connecticut would be empowering male caregivers as valid caretakers of children, while simultaneously easing the still-lopsided burden on female caregivers.

At a time when the national dialogue around this issue is only growing,³ Connecticut should be a leader in promoting gender equality in all areas of public life, including providing male caregivers of young children the same opportunities as their female counterparts. The ACLU-CT thus strongly supports Senate Bill 121 and encourages the committee to do the same.

¹ Aliya Hamid Rao, “Even breadwinning wives don’t get equality at home.” *The Atlantic*, May 12, 2019, *available at* <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2019/05/breadwinning-wives-gender-inequality/589237/>.

² See Hannah Natanson, “Should there be diaper-changing stations in men’s bathrooms? With proposed new law, D.C. wades into national debate.” *The Washington Post*, Jul. 14, 2019, *available at* https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/should-there-be-diaper-changing-stations-in-mens-bathrooms-with-proposed-law-dc-wades-into-national-debate/2019/07/14/72c800f6-9cc8-11e9-85d6-5211733f92c7_story.html.

³ Melisa Gomez, “A father’s photo reignites the conversation about diaper changing stations.” *New York Times*, Oct. 5, 2018, *available at* <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/05/us/father-changing-diaper-photo.html>.