

Senator Tammy Duckworth  
524 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Deb Fischer  
454 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

October 15, 2019

Dear Senator Duckworth and Senator Fischer,

We, the undersigned organizations, thank you for introducing the Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act. By leading Congress to protect and support breastfeeding, you demonstrate a commitment to our nation's families. Breastfeeding is a proven primary prevention strategy, building a foundation for life-long health and wellness. Breastfeeding parents who choose or need to travel should not have to struggle to find lactation spaces – no matter the size of the airport – risking painful engorgement, their milk supply, and possibly their breastfeeding success.

Building on the success of the Friendly Airports for Mothers (FAM) Act, already being implemented in airports across the nation well ahead of the required 2021 implementation date, the Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act would extend these provisions to small hub airports. These airports would have three additional years to come into compliance, and would be able to use Airport Improvement Program funds for the purpose of complying with the new requirement.

Airports that are designated as small hub airports for three consecutive years by the Federal Aviation Administration would be required to provide a private, non-bathroom space in each terminal for breastfeeding people to express breast milk. The space must be accessible to persons with disabilities, available in each terminal building after the security checkpoint, and include a place to sit, a table or other flat surface, and an electrical outlet. In addition, small hub airports would be required to maintain a baby changing table in at least one men's and one women's restroom in each passenger terminal building of the airport.

Human milk is the preferred and most appropriate "First Food," adapting over time to meet the changing needs of the growing child. We join the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and all major medical authorities in recommending that infants be exclusively breastfed for six months and continue to breastfeed for the first year of life and as long afterwards as mutually desired by mother and infant.

The evidence for the value of breastfeeding to children's *and* mother's health is scientific, solid, and continually being reaffirmed by new research. Compared with formula-fed children, those who are breastfed have a reduced risk of ear, skin, stomach, and respiratory infections; diarrhea; sudden infant death syndrome; and necrotizing enterocolitis. In the longer term, breastfed children have a reduced risk of obesity, type 1 and 2 diabetes, asthma, and childhood leukemia. Women who breastfed their children have a reduced long-term risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and breast and ovarian cancers.

Breastfeeding also provides a range of benefits for employers and society. A 2016 study of both maternal & pediatric health outcomes and associated costs based on 2012 breastfeeding rates showed that, if 90% of infants were breastfed according to medical recommendations, 3,340 deaths, \$3 billion in medical costs, and \$14.2 billion in costs of premature death would be prevented, annually!

Yet in spite of this tremendous recognition—and laws in 50 states that specifically allow women to breastfeed in any public or private location—lactating people continue to face barriers, even harassment, when breastfeeding in public. No matter what they're doing or where they are, breastfeeding people need to express milk every few hours in order to keep up their supply. And when away from their babies, airports are just one of many public places where they face challenges finding a clean, private space to pump. Missing even one needed pumping session can have several undesirable consequences, including discomfort, leaking, inflammation and infection, decreased supply, and ultimately, breastfeeding cessation. As a result, traveling can present a significant barrier to breastfeeding.

Most families today choose to breastfeed, but a range of obstacles can make it difficult to fit breastfeeding into parents' lives. We know that 80% of mothers intend to breastfeed, and 83.2% actually do breastfeed at birth. Yet only 24.9% of U.S. infants are still exclusively breastfed at six months of age.

Current federal law requires employers to provide nursing mothers who are nonexempt employees a private, non-bathroom location to express breast milk. Airport lactation spaces are therefore an important step to accommodating lactating travelers as well as lactating employees working in airports. A growing number of airports have designated lactation spaces, yet many lactating people still end up in restrooms or on airport floors. Travelers rarely have control over how long they are in transit, making accessible accommodations within airports a critical priority.

We are heartened to see the implementation of the FAM Act in large and medium hub airports and look forward to expanding similar requirements to small hub airports via the Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act. This expansion supports, promotes, and protects breastfeeding in rural areas, further contributing to national public health goals.

The Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act would help keep our nation's families healthy by ensuring that breastfeeding travelers and airport employees (in airports of all sizes) have access to appropriate facilities. This is an important step toward ensuring *all* families have the opportunity to reach their personal breastfeeding goals, and in improving public health.

Again, we applaud your leadership in introducing the Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act and stand ready to help you achieve its passage.

Sincerely,

**CO-SIGNERS**

**International, National, & Tribal Organizations:**

1,000 Days  
Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Breastfeeding Institute  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Baby-Friendly USA, Inc.  
CHEER (Center for Health Equity, Education, and Research)  
Childbirth and Postpartum Professionals Association  
Every Mother, Inc.  
HealthConnect One  
Healthy Children Project, Inc.  
Human Milk Banking Association of North America  
Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding and Lactation Education  
International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners  
International Childbirth Education Association  
Lactation Education Resources  
Lamaze International  
La Leche League Alliance for Breastfeeding Education  
La Leche League USA  
Mamava  
Mom2Mom Global  
MomsRising  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National WIC Association  
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Breastfeeding Coalition  
Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere, Inc.  
United States Breastfeeding Committee  
United States Lactation Consultant Association  
Women-Inspired Systems' Enrichment

**Regional, State, & Local Organizations:**

Alabama Breastfeeding Committee  
Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition  
Alimentacion Segura Infantil (ASI)  
Allegheny County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Appalachian Breastfeeding Network  
Arkansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Baobab Birth Collective  
The Breastfeeding Center of Pittsburgh  
Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware  
Breastfeeding Coalition of South Central Wisconsin  
BreastfeedLA  
California Breastfeeding Coalition  
Centro Pediatrico de Lactancia y Crianza  
Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates  
Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition  
Colorado Lactation Consultant Association  
Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition  
District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition  
Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition  
The Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding and Lactation Education  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition  
Lactation Improvement Network of Kentucky  
Maine State Breastfeeding Coalition  
Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition  
Maternity Care Coalition  
Michigan Breastfeeding Network  
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition  
Missouri Breastfeeding Coalition  
Montana State Breastfeeding Coalition  
Morning Star Moms, Inc  
Mothers' Milk Bank at Austin  
Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast  
New Hampshire Breastfeeding Task Force  
New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.  
New Mexico Breastfeeding Task Force  
New York City Breastfeeding Leadership Council, Inc.  
New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.  
North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition  
Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance  
Precious Jewels Moms Ministries  
Pretty Mama Breastfeeding LLC

Southern Nevada Breastfeeding Coalition

Texas Breastfeeding Coalition

Virginia Breastfeeding Coalition

Vital Village Network/Boston Breastfeeding Coalition

West Virginia Breastfeeding Alliance

Wisconsin Breastfeeding Coalition

Women-Inspired Systems' Enrichment

Women's Rights and Empowerment Network

Worksites for Wellness

Wright State University, Boonshoft School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics