Dear Members of the 118th Congress:

As your constituents, we warmly welcome you to the new congressional session and extend our best wishes for the years ahead. As you embrace opportunities to address national challenges during this session, we urge you to consider the role Congress can play in building the infant nutrition security infrastructure this nation sorely needs. In particular, breastfeeding gives infants and mothers important and long-lasting health protections that contribute to significant public health cost savings.¹

Breastfeeding has a profound impact on population health outcomes. The evidence for the value of human milk on overall health for infants, children, and mothers is scientific, robust, and continually reaffirmed by new research. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends infants be exclusively breastfed for six months with continued breastfeeding while introducing complementary foods for two years or as long as mutually desired by the mother and child.² Breastfed infants are at lower risk of certain infections and sudden unexplained infant death. A recent CDC study of over 3 million U.S. births found that ever breastfeeding is associated with a 26% reduction in the odds of post-perinatal (between 7-364 days) infant death.³ Breastfed children have decreased risk of obesity, type 1 and 2 diabetes, asthma, and childhood leukemia. Women who breastfed reduce their risk of specific chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and breast and ovarian cancers.⁴

The majority of pregnant people and new mothers want to breastfeed.⁵ Yet, numerous barriers in healthcare, community, and employment settings impede breastfeeding success. While 83.2% of infants are breastfed at birth, only 24.9% of U.S. infants are still exclusively breastfed at six months of age and there are persistent breastfeeding disparities by racial, geographic, and socioeconomic factors.

The American people, especially our babies, are the nation’s most valuable resource. We must take action through systemic interventions that ensure every baby is fed and every mother has the opportunity to reach their breastfeeding goals. Recent legislative wins like the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act clearly demonstrate that breastfeeding is a bipartisan policy issue. Thank you for your careful consideration of the following breastfeeding-friendly priorities you can move forward in the 118th Congressional Session:

**Increase Funding for Breastfeeding in the Federal Budget:**

*We urge Congress to invest in breastfeeding as a public health imperative.*

Human milk feeding plays a critical role in establishing good nutrition, healthy weight, and in reducing the risk of chronic disease. Funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hospitals Promoting Breastfeeding program helps state and local governments, tribes, community-based organizations, and hospitals implement upstream interventions that support breastfeeding families and positively impact the health of the American people. Lactation support is also an important component of a wide range of federally funded programs, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program, State Physical Activity and Nutrition program, Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, Healthy Start, and beyond.

**Address Gaps in Infant Nutrition Security Systems:**
We urge Congress to expand access to pasteurized donor human milk, advance a plan for infant and young child feeding in emergencies, reduce predatory marketing practices by formula manufacturers, and ensure the safety of commercial milk formulas.

This year, in addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many families also had to navigate the devastating infant formula recall and shortage. Policymakers must prioritize policies and investments for infant nutrition security so that we never find ourselves in this situation again. It is critical that the nation takes decisive action to build a robust infrastructure for infant nutrition security in the U.S. that holds all families in care.

**Increase Support for Breastfeeding in Workplaces:**

We urge Congress to establish a national paid family and medical leave program and address gaps in lactation accommodation protections for employees and students.

Employment policies in the United States make breastfeeding incredibly difficult. The United States is one of the only countries in the world without a national paid family and medical leave program, and nearly 1 in 4 employed mothers return to work within two weeks of childbirth. Many new moms return to work or school before the breastfeeding relationship has been firmly established, only to find themselves fighting for the right to pump breast milk during the work or school day. Without the time and space they need, they can lose their milk supply and risk painful infection.

**Access to Lactation Support and Supplies**

We urge Congress to advance legislation that increases access to telehealth services and improves community lactation support as part of comprehensive maternity and postpartum care.

Too often, new parents are left without the basic lactation support and supplies they need to start and maintain human milk feeding. The pandemic revealed that rural and economically marginalized urban communities with limited broadband lack access to telehealth lactation support services and gaps in continuity of care and community-based support services such as home visiting are widespread. Most health plans are required to cover the costs of lactation support services and breastfeeding equipment and supplies. However, implementation of the federal guidelines by insurance providers has been inconsistent, and many families struggle to access the supplies and services they need.

**Maternity Care Practices**

We urge Congress to take decisive action to confront the U.S. maternal mortality crisis, including working with and investing in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase the implementation of evidence-based maternity care practices that enable breastfeeding.

The United States is facing a serious maternity care crisis. Maternal mortality is higher than it was in previous generations, with significant and worsening disparities for women and families of color, particularly in Black and Indigenous communities. Maternity care practices play an essential role in reducing Black maternal mortality and infant morbidity while setting families up for breastfeeding success. These practices contribute to lifelong health and wellness.

As a member of the 118th Congress, we encourage your leadership on these critical policy priorities. Congressional history shows that breastfeeding is truly a bipartisan issue that legislators from both sides
of the aisle can agree on. Families are counting on all of us to work together and eliminate the barriers that impede lactation success.

We look forward to working with you to advance these policy priorities.

SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS
as of 3/8/2023

International, National, Tribal, Regional, and Cultural Organizations:

9to5
1,000 Days, an Initiative of FHI Solutions
A Better Balance
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Nursing
American Association of Birth Centers
American Breastfeeding Institute
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians
American Public Health Association
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Baby Café USA
Baby-Friendly USA, Inc.
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe Tribe
Benten Technologies, Inc.
Birthing Project USA
Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities
Breastfeeding USA
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Health Equity, Education and Research
Center for Law and Social Policy
Chocolate Milk Café National Inc.
Cimilre Breast Pumps
Coalition For Economic Justice
Coalition For Lactation-Friendly Schools
Consortium for Infant and Child Health
Cubtale, Inc.
Every Mother, Inc.
First Focus Campaign for Children

Futures Without Violence
HealthConnect One
Healthy Children Project, Inc.
Healthy Horizons
Heart For The Hopeless
Human Milk Banking Association of North America
Indigenous Breastfeeding Counselor
International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners
Jobs With Justice
La Leche League Alliance for Breastfeeding Education
La Leche League of the United States of America, Inc.
Lactation Education Resources
Lactation University
March for Moms Association
Mamava
March for Moms
Medela LLC
Military Birth Resource Network and Postpartum Coalition
MilkMate
Mom Congress
Mom2Mom Global
MomsRising
Mothering Justice
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Lactation Consultant Alliance
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
National Organization for Women
State, and Local Organizations:

Alabama:
Alabama Breastfeeding Committee

Alaska:
Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition

Arizona:
Central Arizona Lactation Consultants Association

California:
A Family Affair
Alameda County Breastfeeding Coalition
API Breastfeeding Taskforce
Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Lactation Collaborative of California
Baby Café Bakersfield
Breastfeed LA
Caring Across Generations
Experience Birth & Beyond
Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission
Inland Empire Breastfeeding Coalition
Legal Aid at Work
Maternal and Child Health Access
San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition
Sonoma County Department of Health Services

Colorado:
Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition
Colorado Children’s Campaign
Colorado Jobs With Justice
Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition
CREA Results
Cuenta Conmigo Lactancia
Denver WIC
Edgewater Collective
Elephant Circle
Guereca’s Consultants
Jefferson County Public Health
Kaizen Food Rescue
Latinas Community Connections Services
MotherJourney
Triad Early Childhood Council/Child Care Innovations

Connecticut:
Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition
Oh, Baby! Lactation Care

District of Columbia:
The District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition
Paid Leave For All

Florida:
Breastfeeding Coalition of Palm Beach County
Central Florida Jobs With Justice
Florida Breastfeeding Coalition
Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force
Lactation Whisperer
MJ Lactation Services
Mothers’ Milk Bank of Florida
Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force
The Nest of Lakeland

Georgia:
Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition
Georgia Southern University
Wonderlove Lactation Services

Hawaii:
Beautiful Informed Beginnings LLC
Breastfeeding Hawaii
Hawaii Indigenous Breastfeeding Collaborative
Hawai‘i Maternal Infant Health
    Collaborative/Early Childhood Action
    Strategy
Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii
La Leche League of Maui
La Leche League of Oahu

Idaho:
LilyArden Lactation

Illinois:
Mothers’ Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes
North Central Breastfeeding Task Force
Precious Jewels Moms Ministries
Prevent Child Abuse Illinois
Rock Island County Health Department
Whiteside County WIC Program
Women Employed

Indiana:
Dupont Hospital
Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition
Indiana Department of Health- WIC

Iowa:

Kansas:
Kansas Birth Justice Society
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition

Kentucky:
College of Nursing, University of Kentucky
Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition
Willa, Nutrition & Lactation

Louisiana:
Birthmark Doula Collective

Maine:
Maine State Breastfeeding Coalition

Maryland:
Birth and Breastfeed with Confidence
Hands That Touch Home Health
Hartford County Health Department- Maternal Child Health Unit
Maryland Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics
Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition
Maryland Family Network
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Maryland Chesapeake Chapter
Trinity Wellness
Westminster Pediatrics

Massachusetts:
Bay State Birth Coalition
Boston Medical Center Vital Village Networks
Massachusetts Lactation Consultant Association
Mothers’ Milk Bank Northeast
The Boston Breastfeeding Coalition

Michigan:
Berrien County Breastfeeding Coalition
Breastfeed Macomb
Favor Community Services
Gratiot County Breastfeeding Coalition-Child Advocacy
Hurley Medical Center
InterCare Community Health Network WIC Program
Michigan Breastfeeding Network

Minnesota:
- Gender Justice
- Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition
- Minnesota Milk Bank for Babies
- Twin Cities Regional Breastfeeding Coalition

Mississippi:
- East Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition
- Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition
- Mothers’ Milk Bank of Mississippi

Missouri:
- Healthy Nourishments, LLC
- Missouri Breastfeeding Coalition
- St. Louis Breastfeeding Coalition

Montana:
- Billings Breastfeeding Coalition
- Billings Clinic
- Lactation Associates of Montana
- Montana Association of WIC Agencies

Nebraska:
- Nebraska Breastfeeding Coalition
- Touch of Gold

New Hampshire:
- Center for Autism & Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University
- New Hampshire Breastfeeding Task Force

New Jersey:
- A Shared Mothers Journey, LLC
- Advocates for Children of New Jersey
- New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition
- NJ Citizen Action

New Mexico:
- New Mexico Breastfeeding Task Force

New York:
- Ancient Song Doula Services
- Bronx Breastfeeding Coalition
- Joslyn Levy and Associates
- Lehman College, CUNY
- Long Island Lactation Consultant Association
- Morrisania D&TC WIC Program
- New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition
- NYC Breastfeeding Leadership Council, Inc.
- NYC Department of Health
- Supporting Our Mothers Initiative
- The New York Milk Bank

North Carolina:
- Breastfeed Durham
- Breastfeed Orange NC
- Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute
- Duke University School of Nursing
- Emerald Doulas, LLC
- Kayce Hodos Counseling & Consulting
- MAAME, Inc.
- Milk & More Lactation
- North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition
- North Carolina Justice Center
- North Raleigh Doulas
- SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective
- Triangle Doulas of Color, LLC
- Ultimate Fertility and Lactation Consulting

Ohio:
- Bright Future Lactation Resource Centre Ltd.
- Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
- Dayton Children’s Hospital
- Marion Public Health 50
- Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance
- The Ohio Women’s Public Policy Network
- The Walker Group, LLC
Oklahoma:  
Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates  
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy  

Oregon:  
African American Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon  
Black Parent Initiative  
Linn County Public Health WIC Program  
Northwest Mothers’ Milk Bank  

Pennsylvania:  
CONVERGE at the University of Pittsburgh  
La Leche League of Western Pennsylvania  
National Council of Jewish Women Pittsburgh Section  
Penn State College of Medicine  
Pennsylvania Breastfeeding Coalition  
St. Luke’s University Healthcare Network  
Women’s Law Project  

Puerto Rico:  
Alimentación Segura Infantil  

Rhode Island:  
Children’s Friend  

South Carolina:  
BirthMatters  
Prisma Health Midlands Healthy Start  
South Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition  

South Dakota:  
Avera Behavioral Health – Outpatient Services  
Early Learner South Dakota  

Tennessee:  
Comprehensive Care and Wellness  
Memphis Area Lactation Consultant Association  
Shelby County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Tennessee Breastfeeding Coalition  

Texas:  
Breastfeeding Perspectives  
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic  
Texas Breastfeeding Coalition  
VAC | Westbrook Clinic  

Utah:  
Comunidad Materna en Utah  

Vermont:  
Family Center of Washington County  
Milton Family Community Center  
Orange County Parent Child Center Inc.  
Parent Child Center of Northwestern Counseling & Support Services  
Springfield Area Parent Child Center  
Sunrise Family Resource Center  
The Junior League of Champlain Valley  
Vermont Donor Milk Center, Inc.  
Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance  
Vermont Lactation Consultant Association  
Windham Southeast School District’s Early Education Services  

Virginia:  
#757Breastfeeds  
Breastfeeding Blues & Bliss, LLC  
Healthy Families Newport News  
Nurture  

Washington:  
Breastfeeding Coalition of Washington  
South Sound Lactation Network  

West Virginia:  
West Virginia Breastfeeding Alliance  

Wisconsin:  
Breastfeeding Alliance of Northeast Wisconsin  
Lac Courte Oreilles Community Health Center, Maternal Child Health Program  
Wisconsin Association of Lactation Consultants


