Resolution #1

Introduced by: Carrie Pierce MD, Alex Kipp MD, Nellie Wirsing MD, and Justine Parker DO

Subject: Support for Breastfeeding Mothers in the Workplace

WHEREAS, evidence has overwhelmingly shown that breastfeeding has significant health benefits for both mothers and infants;

WHEREAS, studies have found that infants who are not breastfed experience higher rates of infection, disease, diabetes, obesity, childhood leukemia, and lymphoma; mothers who do not breastfeed are at a higher risk for breast and ovarian cancers, heart disease, postpartum depression, diabetes, and rheumatoid arthritis;¹

WHEREAS, the AAFP affirms that “all babies, with rare exceptions, be breastfed and/or receive expressed human milk exclusively for the first six months of life [and should] continue with the addition of complementary foods throughout the second half of the first year;”²

WHEREAS, despite the recommendation of major medical associations including the AAFP, 83% of mothers who gave birth in 2015 started out breastfeeding their infants³ but only 25% of infants continue to exclusively breastfeed at 6 months, and 36% breastfed at all at 12 months;⁴

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WHEREAS, black infants are much less likely than white infants to breastfeed, a pattern consistent with underlying race-based health disparities and institutional discrimination;\(^5\)

WHEREAS, a recent report published by the Center for Worklife Law states that many mothers are forced to decide between continuing to breastfeed and their jobs, largely due to discriminatory workplace practices that prevent many breastfeeding mothers from expressing milk at work;\(^6\)

WHEREAS, despite the federal Break Time for Nursing Mothers law, which mandates break time and private space for milk expression, over 9 million women of childbearing age are not covered due to technicalities, such as being employed as teachers, agricultural workers, health care providers, retail workers and managers, etc.;\(^7\)

WHEREAS, even for those who are covered, the Break Time for Nursing Mothers law is largely unenforced for the average worker, especially low-income workers and unmarried mothers;\(^8\)

WHEREAS, despite many states passing protective legislation to fill in the gaps left by federal law, 27.6 million women workers of childbearing age in the United States are left without the basic protections needed by breastfeeding workers;

WHEREAS, lactation laws have been proven to effectively increase breastfeeding rates\(^9\)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Oregon AFP will advocate for the enforcement of current legislation as well as additional legislation that supports the ability of working mothers to breastfeed and

BE IT RESOLVED that the OAFP will bring this resolution to the AAFP in order to direct it to also advocate for the enforcement of current legislation as well as additional legislation that supports the ability of working mothers to breastfeed.


\(^7\) Ibid.
