

Our Impact in 2019

A Better Balance leverages the power of the law to promote full equality and to ensure that all workers can care for themselves and their loved ones without risking their economic security. This work has never been more urgent.

Here's how your support in 2019 made a difference in the lives of millions of women and caregivers throughout the country.



The New York Times

Letter to the Editor:
Pregnant Women in the Work Force
The New York Times, 9/17/2019

To the Editor:
“We need stronger legal protections for working families so that every woman who wants or needs to work is able to. As an immediate first step, we need the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act for every woman across the country.”

HUFFPOST

Women’s Soccer Put Equal Pay On The Agenda. Now What?
The Huffington Post, 7/10/2019

The New York Times Parenting

How Freelancing Parents Can Create Maternity or Paternity Leave
NYT Parenting, 5/21/2019

How to Ask for Maternity or Paternity Leave When Your Company Has No Policy
NYT Parenting, 5/21/2019

How to Ask for Parental Leave When You’re an Hourly Worker
NYT Parenting, 5/21/2019

If You’re Pregnant and Working, Know Your Rights
NYT Parenting, 7/18/2019



Walmart is changing its sick leave policy, and will pay bonuses for good attendance
CNN, 2/1/2019

WORKING MOTHER

More and More States Are Expanding Pumping Protections for Working Moms in 2019
Working Mother, 1/11/2019

More Parents Than Ever Are Suing Their Employers for Discrimination—and Winning
Working Mother, 7/17/2019



Elizabeth Warren says she lost her job when pregnant. Thousands of women say the same.
Vox, 10/9/2019



How Paid Vacation Looks Around the World
The Brian Lehrer Show, 1/14/2019

SCALAWAG

Reproductive justice wins in Tennessee aren’t just about abortion
Scalawag, 10/28/2019



REFINERY29

5 Women Share Their Stories of Pregnancy Discrimination
Refinery 29, 10/11/2019



House panel vets sweeping pregnancy discrimination bill, *Reuters, 10/22/2019*



Supporters Make the Case for Paid Personal Time
NY1, Inside City Hall, 8/22/2019

The New York Times

MoMA PS1 Settles With Curator Who Said Giving Birth Cost Her Job Offer
The New York Times, 3/26/2019

Divided Over Abortion, but Joining Forces for Women’s Workplace Rights
The New York Times, 7/12/2019

The Guardian

Walmart facing gender discrimination lawsuits from female employees
The Guardian, 2/18/2019

Bloomberg Law

Portability Makes Some Paid Leave Programs Good for Gig Workers
Bloomberg Law, 5/24/2019

THE Nation.

The American Workplace Still Won’t Accommodate Pregnant Workers
The Nation, 8/21/2019

Tennessean.

More women in the workforce will keep Tennessee’s economy growing | Opinion
Tennessean, 5/17/2019

BY THE NUMBERS: A Better Balance's Impact in 2019

As a result of our legal efforts...

Over **1.6 million people** in Connecticut and **1.8 million people** in Oregon now have the right to **paid family and medical leave** to bond with a new child or care for a personal or family member's serious illness.

New laws in Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon protect over **2 million working women** against pregnancy discrimination with the explicit right to **reasonable pregnancy accommodations** when they need them, ensuring they can stay healthy and on the job.

New York's **new gender equality measures** benefit over **4.5 million working women in New York** with new protections around equal pay, sexual harassment, breastfeeding, and more.

Approximately **730,000** people now have the right to take **paid sick time**, thanks to Dallas' new paid sick time ordinance and more general paid time off laws in Maine and Nevada.

In the courts, we are helping to defend an additional **6 million workers' rights to paid sick time** from state interference and corporate lawsuits challenging the laws.

We provided direct support to over **1,000 callers** to our **free and confidential legal helpline**, helping workers across the country understand and exercise their legal rights.

ABB and our clients were featured in over **60 stories in national and local news outlets**, including *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *The Brian Lehrer Show*, *The Nation*, *Reuters*, *Vox*, *HuffPost*, *The Guardian*, *Bloomberg*, *Fortune*, *Business Insider*, *Refinery29*, *Jacobin*, *Working Mother*, *NY-1's Inside City Hall*, *the Tennessean*, *the Nashville Post*, *Scalawag*, and more.

We presented to over **4,000 advocates and supporters** across the country on topics including paid leave, pregnancy discrimination, breastfeeding, preemption, equal pay, and childcare.



the work and family legal center

Leading the movement to end pregnancy discrimination

As we found in our May report, “Long Overdue,” far too many workers needing accommodations while pregnant are losing out under current federal law. We’ve continued to lead the movement to strengthen legal protections for pregnant workers, and as a result of our efforts, Kentucky, Maine, and Oregon became the latest states to give workers the explicit right to reasonable pregnancy accommodations when they need them. 27 states—red, blue, and purple—now have similar laws on the books!

We’ve been hard at work to extend these rights to every worker in the country: In October, we brought the stories of so many women who were unjustly forced to choose between their job and a healthy pregnancy to the national stage, testifying at a Congressional hearing on the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. And in November, we brought together dozens of advocates from across the South for the first Southern Pregnant Workers Fairness Convening.

Fighting for paid family & medical leave for all, state by state

This year, we succeeded in passing robust, inclusive paid family & medical leave programs in Connecticut and Oregon, as well as in expanding New Jersey’s existing program. Each of these laws adopted our model for an inclusive family definition, ensuring LGBTQ workers, immigrant families, people with disabilities, and others can take leave to care for their loved ones. Now, paid leave is the law in eight states and D.C.—and these laws are only growing stronger with each one that passes.

We’ve been busy laying the groundwork for other states across the country to pass their own programs, and to make these laws models for a federal solution through the FAMILY Act, which was reintroduced in Congress this year.



ABB Co-President Dina Bakst testifies at the “Long Over Due” Congressional Hearing in support of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

SPOTLIGHT:

We’re proud of our continued role in making New York State a national model for laws advancing justice and equality for workers and their families.

This year, with our help, New York passed a groundbreaking set of measures to advance workplace and household gender equity! These legal steps include an expansion of New York’s equal pay law, a ban on employers asking for salary history, sexual harassment reforms, and new protections for breastfeeding parents.

Plus, new data shows that New York’s landmark paid family leave program is working just as intended! One key indicator of the program’s success? Nearly a third of those who took bonding leave were men. The numbers confirm what we know from talking with workers across the state: paid family leave makes families healthier, happier, and financially stronger.



ABB Vice President Elizabeth Gedmark and Policy Associate Feroza Freeland meet with Rep. Gloria Johnson, sponsor of Tennessee’s paid family & medical leave bill.

Defending workers' rights to paid sick time from state interference

The momentum for paid sick time continues to build across the country: 11 states and 34 jurisdictions have guaranteed workers this right. Unfortunately, in response, states are interfering and blocking paid sick time laws from going into effect. That's why we're helping to defend millions of workers' rights to paid sick time from state interference and corporate lawsuits.

In a major victory this summer, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld Pittsburgh's paid sick time law after a four-year legal battle! We are continuing to provide assistance in paid sick time lawsuits in Minnesota, Texas, and Michigan, and we'll keep pushing back against these attacks on local democracy as they arise.



SPOTLIGHT:

***The New York Times* features our former client in Tennessee, Theresa Gonzales, and the lack of legal protections for working parents in the South.**

Theresa, an admissions counselor in Nashville, Tennessee, was about to become a first-time mother. Instead, she was fired just days after giving birth. Her story demonstrates the urgent need to strengthen protections for working parents, especially in the South, where safeguards are scarce.

"It is supposed to be a time of joy. Instead, my experience as a first-time mother in the American workforce left me traumatized," she told the Times.

Holding corporations accountable to the law

Following our filing of a class action lawsuit, Walmart announced changes to its attendance policy that provide greater protection to pregnant workers, ending its discriminatory practice of penalizing workers for medical absences. However, there is more enforcement work to be done to ensure the policy fully protects the rights of all workers.

Plus, following months of public pressure on behalf of our client in Tennessee, Tasha Murrell—whose heartbreaking story of having a miscarriage after her employer, XPO Logistics, refused to accommodate her request for light duty was covered in the *New York Times*—XPO Logistics announced that they were changing their policy around pregnancy accommodations.

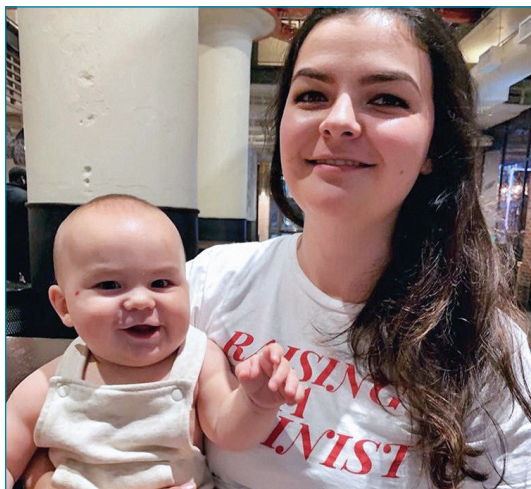
We are committed to continuing to hold corporations accountable to the law and ensuring the rights of pregnant employees and all workers are respected.



Supporting workers with direct legal services and know-your-rights education

We're committed to arming workers across the country—especially low-income women, working parents, and all caregivers—with the tools they need to understand and exercise their rights around paid family leave, paid sick time, pregnancy and breastfeeding, and more.

This year, we're proud to have provided direct support to over 1,000 callers to our free legal helpline. We've also reached thousands of workers through regular trainings and educational events, and hundreds of thousands more online with our cutting edge know-your-rights guides.



Stories from our helpline: A self-advocacy success

Aubree, a worker at a manufacturing company in Georgia, called us after encountering resistance from her employer about her pumping needs. We informed her of her rights, and she then successfully advocated for herself. She has not had any problems pumping at work since then!

"I was able to approach the topic with confidence when I spoke with my employer. Thank you ABB!"

Our Community Advocates in action: Natasha Jackson calls on Congress to strengthen protections for pregnant workers

Natasha Jackson, an ABB Community Advocate in South Carolina, was the highest-ranking account executive at a Rent-A-Center when she became pregnant. Rather than accommodating her lifting restriction, her employer forced her to take unpaid leave, and eventually terminated her. Without steady income, she and her husband had to abandon their plan to buy a house and were left unable to support their growing family.

But now, Natasha is advocating for change: In September, she joined us on Capitol Hill to call on Congress to pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.



"A Better Balance inspired me to tell my story and seek fairness for all women in South Carolina, and now across the United States. I ended up testifying at the state legislature twice in support of the South Carolina Pregnancy Accommodation Act, which passed in 2018, and published an op-ed

in one of South Carolina's most prominent newspapers. And I've seen how well the law is working. In fact, just a couple months ago, my friend approached me because her employer was trying to push her out while pregnant when the only accommodation she needed was to not work overtime. I gave her a bunch of materials and advice on the new law, and because of that she was able to stay on the job and work a normal full-time schedule. And she didn't have to go through what I or my sister had to go through. I am asking you to stand up for women like me so we can have an equal opportunity to support our families while protecting our health. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would ensure that no pregnant woman—no matter where she lives—has to choose between her job and a healthy pregnancy."



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Call our free, confidential legal helpline: 1-833-NEED-ABB

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