An Open Letter from Tennessee Business Leaders Urging Passage of the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520)

February 6, 2020

Dear Members of the Tennessee General Assembly,

As concerned Tennessee business leaders, we urge you to help boost our state’s economy by passing the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520). This important legislation will provide much-needed clarity to employers and help pregnant women who need reasonable accommodations, like a stool to sit on or extra bathroom breaks, to remain healthy and safe on the job, unless it would create an undue hardship for the business.

Ensuring that pregnant employees receive the accommodations they need promotes healthier pregnancies and babies, which leads to lower healthcare costs for employers and the state.

As leaders of businesses both large and small from across our state, we know that the current patchwork of laws creates confusion and uncertainty. The Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act establishes one clear standard, allowing us to address accommodation requests quickly and informally.

Providing reasonable accommodations also keeps our valuable employees working and reduces turnover and training costs. These types of accommodations are temporary and can typically be provided for a very low cost or no cost at all.

Tennessee ranks 41st in the nation for the number of women participating in the labor force. Given our historically low unemployment rate and tight labor market, it is important to ensure that everyone who is willing and able to work can do so. In order for our businesses and economy to continue to grow and prosper, we must make it easier for women to join and remain in the workforce.

Twenty-seven states, including our neighbors in Kentucky and South Carolina, have already passed legislation to guarantee reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. We urge you to join our peers and reaffirm Tennessee’s commitment to promoting healthy mothers and babies, streamlining regulations for businesses, and strengthening economic growth by supporting the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520).

Sincerely,
Chambers of Commerce:
Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce
Knoxville Chamber of Commerce
Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

Businesses:
A Coulter Consulting | Chattanooga
Bail U Out Bonding | Nashville
Bliss Home | Knoxville, Nashville & Louisville, KY
Bridge Financial Planning | Chattanooga
Cafe Eclectic | Memphis
Claridy Communications | Chattanooga
Embellish | Chattanooga
exBREASTyourself Festival Pumping Suites | Gallatin
Firefly Social Media | Chattanooga
getFIT615 | Nashville
Inspire Chiropractic | Chattanooga
K:: A Boutique by Katherine Roberts | Chattanooga
Language South | Chattanooga
Matt Ferry Media | Murfreesboro
Pancake Pantry | Nashville
Parnassus Books | Nashville
Russell Marketing | Chattanooga
Second Story Real Estate | Chattanooga
Tennessee Reproductive Medicine: Infertility Treatment | Chattanooga
The Ornamentor | Chattanooga
The Otaku Group | Nashville
The Tap House, LLC | Chattanooga
Vector Printing | Chattanooga
Yassin's Falafel House | Knoxville