

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 14, 2021

## **Pregnant Workers Fairness Coalition Applauds House Passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act & Urges Swift Vote in the Senate**

(Washington, D.C.) The U.S. House of Representatives today passed the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) in an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote. This critical workforce and maternal health bill will ensure pregnant workers can receive reasonable accommodations to stay healthy and working while also not imposing an undue hardship on employers. We applaud this strong bipartisan showing and House leaders' commitment to ending the mistreatment of pregnant workers in our country, including Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Reps. Jerry Nadler, John Katko, Bobby Scott, Lucy McBath, and Jaime Herrera Beutler. Now, we urge the Senate to bring the PWFA to a vote without delay.

As women have been forced out of the workforce in record numbers during the pandemic, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would ensure that pregnant workers can stay healthy and attached to the workforce. [Over 200](#) women's rights, worker's rights, maternal health and racial justice organizations support this legislation as do the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) and leading [businesses](#).

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would help pregnant workers obtain reasonable, medically-necessary accommodations, closing [gaps in current law](#) that have left too many pregnant workers unprotected for too long.

Pregnant workers—especially those in low wage and physically demanding jobs, [disproportionately](#) Black and Latina workers—have long been denied modest accommodations that they need, forcing an impossible choice between the health of their pregnancy and their economic security. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act will advance respect, equality, and dignity for pregnant workers across the country.

*Quotes from PWFA Coalition member organizations:*

### **Dina Bakst, Co-Founder and Co-President, A Better Balance:**

“Today’s House passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act represents a resounding victory for the pregnant workers who have been unjustly treated and undervalued for far too long, especially low-income workers and mothers of color. At A Better Balance, we have heard from thousands of expecting mothers over the years who have been denied accommodations and forced off the job, suffering devastating economic consequences as a result. For nearly a decade, we have been leading the charge to combat this horrific mistreatment, alongside so many brave women who have spoken out, to pass this urgently needed legislation. We thank Rep. Jerry Nadler, Rep. John Katko, Rep. Lucy McBath, Rep. Bobby Scott, Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, and Speaker Nancy Pelosi for championing this bill. As we emerge from a global pandemic that has forced millions of women out of work, the Senate must listen to pregnant workers and act

swiftly to pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and send it to the President's desk. It's [long overdue](#)."

**Vania Leveille, Senior Legislative Counsel, American Civil Liberties Union:**

"Too many pregnant workers — especially those in physically demanding jobs, low wage workers, and women of color — have been fired or forced to take unpaid leave and faced devastating financial consequences as a result. No one should have to choose between a healthy pregnancy and their job. That's why we need the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. Today's strong, bipartisan vote in the House is an important step forward to combat pregnancy discrimination in the workplace and protect the health and economic security of pregnant workers. We call on the Senate to immediately take up and pass this critical and long-overdue legislation and provide pregnant workers the protection they need and deserve, especially now."

**Angela Aina, Executive Director, Black Mamas Matter Alliance:**

"Black Mamas Matter Alliance is proud to support policies that affect positive change for pregnant workers and employers. Some states have taken action to ensure workplace accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding workers. Black pregnant workers will benefit from policies that set and implement national standards to ensure pregnancy fairness in the workplace. The Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act has the capability to ensure Black parenting people can prioritize the health of themselves and their children, without risk of losing their employment."

**Wade Henderson, interim president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights**

"The bipartisan House passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act is a triumph for pregnant workers, especially those from historically marginalized communities or in low-wage jobs. No pregnant worker should be forced to risk their own health or the health of their pregnancy in order to maintain a paycheck, especially during a pandemic and an economic crisis. This bill is critical to promoting economic security for pregnant workers and their families. We applaud the House and urge the Senate to swiftly pass this common sense, bipartisan legislation."

**Stacey D. Stewart, President and CEO, March of Dimes:**

We thank all House members who voted today to pass the *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act* on a strong bipartisan basis. This legislation would ensure that pregnant workers have reasonable accommodations and can work safely while pregnant. We especially applaud the leadership of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and bill sponsors Reps. Jerry Nadler, John Katko, Bobby Scott, Lucy McBath, and Jaime Herrera Beutler. Prioritizing a safe working environment for pregnant people is critical now more important than ever before as the United States battles both the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing maternal and infant health crisis. We have a responsibility to protect pregnant workers and help them have the healthiest pregnancies possible without fear of discrimination or retaliation in the workplace. We now urge the Senate to take up this bipartisan legislation that will promote healthy pregnancies and economic security for all women and their families."

**Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, executive director and CEO, MomsRising:**

“Bipartisan passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act in the U.S. House of Representatives is an important step in making our workplaces more fair and putting policies in place that will enable women and moms to succeed in the workforce, following a devastating year when so many women, and especially moms of color, were pushed out. We need to build a care infrastructure, which includes ending the days when people are forced to choose between their paycheck and a healthy pregnancy. This must be the year the U.S. Senate passes the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act as well, so President Biden can sign it into law.”

**Debra L. Ness, President, National Partnership for Women & Families:**

“Today’s passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act in the House brings us one step closer to providing pregnant people the protections they need - simple things like the opportunity to take bathroom breaks or use a chair when needed. This legislation is a key component of our larger effort to combat maternal mortality and create equity in the workplace, by ensuring the health of pregnant workers throughout their pregnancy. Today’s vote also shows that when lawmakers come together and truly act on behalf of their most vulnerable constituents it makes us all stronger. We look forward to seeing this bill move to the Senate and to it being eventually signed by the president.”

**Rev. Douglas Greenaway, President & CEO, National WIC Association:**

"For years, WIC providers have been at the forefront in advocating for federal protections that support pregnant workers. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act will ensure that expectant workers have reasonable accommodations and can work safely while pregnant. As pregnant workers continue to be on the frontlines during this pandemic, PWFA is needed to help ensure healthy pregnancies for women and their families. PWFA protections are crucial for pregnant WIC moms and WIC staff moms alike. We congratulate the House for taking this big step in passing this legislation. We urge the Senate to step up, prioritize maternal health, and act quickly to pass PWFA."

**Emily Martin, Vice President for Education & Workplace Justice, National Women’s Law Center:**

“Today’s vote brings working people one step closer to no longer being forced to choose between a paycheck and a healthy pregnancy. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act protects pregnant workers who simply want to do their jobs but are prevented when employers refuse to make even minor temporary changes to accommodate their medical needs. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that women are central to our economy—and as many pregnant workers on the frontlines keep our country going every day, we must provide them the basic accommodations they need to stay healthy. Now, it’s the Senate’s turn to swiftly vote for this commonsense bill.”

**Mary J. Novak, Executive Director, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice:**

“NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice applauds the House of Representatives for their passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. This legislation will ensure healthy pregnancies and economic security for working people across the country. We celebrated this same victory in September 2020, but this critical legislation was never brought to a vote on the floor of the Senate.

We cannot allow this setback to happen again. Our Catholic faith teaches us to uphold the dignity of a person and the worker—caring for the health and economic security of pregnant workers is a moral imperative. NETWORK Lobby looks forward to seeing the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act passed through the Senate and sent to President Biden’s desk as swiftly as possible.”

**Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism:**

“The Union for Reform Judaism applauds the House’s bipartisan passage of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. According to the ancient rabbis, workers should not be put in the position where they have "to starve or afflict themselves in order to feed their children" (*Tosefta Bava Metzia* 8:2). With reasonable workplace accommodations, pregnant workers can keep earning a livelihood while protecting their health, so no worker faces the agonizing choice between a healthy pregnancy and their family’s financial security. As the inequitable impact of the pandemic has highlighted, People of Color are more likely to hold demanding, inflexible jobs where they face tradeoffs between their work and their health. Illegal pregnancy discrimination and denial of workplace accommodations, which disproportionately affect pregnant People of Color, contribute to the Black maternal health crisis and other forms of racial inequity. Now we urge the Senate to follow suit and swiftly pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which will help to mitigate the racial and economic injustices that pregnancy discrimination perpetuates.”

**Glenn Spencer, Senior Vice President, Employment Policy Division, U.S. Chamber of Commerce:**

“The Chamber is pleased to see the PWFA get such a strong bipartisan vote. The bill is a balanced approach to protecting the rights of pregnant employees and the interests of employers, and should reduce the possibilities of litigation. We look forward to this bill moving in the Senate where it already has strong bipartisan support.”

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