November 14, 2022

Dear Majority Leader Schumer,

As organizations that promote economic security, civil rights, public health, and gender and racial justice, we thank you for your stated support of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (S. 4431). **As you consider the Senate’s priorities for the rest of the year, we urge you to bring the bill to the Senate floor for a standalone vote.** If the bill does not receive a vote this Congress, it could be years before it passes, and millions of workers will continue to suffer discriminatory treatment and be denied the accommodations they need due to pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation. Time is running out.

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) has long enjoyed bipartisan support and for months has had the votes to pass on the Senate floor. The time to act is now, before it is too late. Securing critically needed accommodation protections for pregnant and postpartum workers—especially when women and families are facing so many barriers to their health and economic prosperity—is worth the time and must be prioritized.

Many pregnant and postpartum workers need modest workplace accommodations during pregnancy, such as more frequent bathroom breaks, temporary light duty work, or a private space for lactation needs. A recent report found that 3 million pregnant women—representing 70 percent of all pregnant women annually—work during their pregnancy each year. The PWFA will provide these workers with the right to reasonable accommodations to stay healthy and financially secure. Unfortunately, our current federal laws do not adequately protect pregnant workers. A stunning two-thirds of workers are losing their federal pregnancy accommodation claims in court.

This issue disproportionately harms Black and Latina women in low-paid, inflexible jobs, including frontline workers hailed as essential during the pandemic. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would provide critical relief by creating a clear standard, similar to the one established under the Americans with Disabilities Act, requiring employers to provide reasonable accommodations to workers with pregnancy-related limitations who need them, absent undue hardship. It will help keep pregnant and postpartum workers healthy while allowing them to remain in the workforce.

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act has broad support from the business community, a diverse coalition of advocates, and the public. Major business groups including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Society for Human Resources Management, and the National Retail Federation, along with leading businesses, support the legislation, and over 200 women’s rights, worker’s rights, maternal health and racial justice organizations have endorsed PWFA. Protecting pregnant workers is an overwhelmingly popular issue for voters, with a recent poll showing 93%
saying it is important for employers to guarantee accommodations to pregnant and post-partum workers, and nearly two-thirds of voters saying that Congress should work quickly to pass the bill into law.

The PWFA has twice passed out of the House of Representatives with overwhelming bipartisan support and the bill was voted out of the Senate Health Education Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee last year on a strong 19-2 bipartisan vote.

You must act now to ensure that pregnant workers do not have to choose between a paycheck and a healthy pregnancy. **We urge you to prioritize the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and bring the bill to a standalone vote on the Senate floor this year.**

Sincerely,

32BJ SEIU
A Better Balance
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
AFL-CIO
Alabama Black Women’s Roundtable
Alabama Coalition on Black Civic Participation
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Better Life Lab at New America
Black Mamas Matter Alliance
Black Women’s Roundtable
BreastfeedLA
California Work & Family Coalition (Family Values at Work/Fiscal Sponsor)
Catholic Labor Network
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for WorkLife Law
Central Healthy Start
Christine's Care & Compassion
Coalition for Social Justice
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)
Economic Opportunity Institute
ERA Coalition
Every Texan
Family Equality
Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership
Oregonizers
Oxfam America
Parents for Public Schools, Inc.
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Pro-Choice North Carolina
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
RESULTS
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society of Women Engineers
Sojourners
The Episcopal Church
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The Little Timmy Project
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
The National Education Association
The Workers Circle
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Union for Reform Judaism
United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
University
Women Employed
Women of Reform Judaism
Women’s Law Project
YWCA of the University of Illinois
YWCA USA
ZERO TO THREE