

HB 2219 -- SUPPORTING WORKING MOMS ACT OF 2014

SPONSOR: Peters

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Health Care Policy by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill establishes the Supporting Working Moms Act of 2014 that requires an employer to provide, for one year after a child's birth, a nursing mother employee a reasonable break time to express breast milk each time the need arises in a location other than a bathroom that is shielded from view and free from intrusion by coworkers and the public. The employer cannot be required to pay the nursing mother employee for any time spent for this purpose.

An employer with less than 50 employees is not subject to these requirements if they would impose an undue hardship causing the employer significant difficulty or expense when considered in relation to the size, financial resources, nature, or structure of the employer's business.

These provisions must apply only to the extent they are not preempted by federal law.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that breastfeeding reduces the risk of infections and sudden infant death syndrome in infants and mothers who breastfeed are less likely to have diabetes and postpartum depression. Returning to work is one of the biggest obstacles to successful breastfeeding. Mothers who breastfeed need a private and clean place to breastfeed and/or pump to successfully go back to work. Supporters say that this is a public health issue. It is not uncommon to have to pump in bathroom, which isn't clean and isn't conducive to encouraging breastfeeding. Testifying for the bill were Representative Peters; Dr. Andrew Benbow; and Dr. Elizabeth Lucore.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.