



the work and family legal center

80 Maiden Lane, Suite 606, New York, NY 10038 | t: 212.430.5982 | f: 212.430.5983 | info@abetterbalance.org | abetterbalance.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, June 15, 2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Melanie Kaye, mkaye@abetterbalance.org, 212-430-5982

**BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS' BILL OF RIGHTS UPDATE
PASSES NEW YORK LEGISLATURE**

Bipartisan Bill Passes Senate with Unanimous Support—Heads to Governor's Desk

ALBANY, N.Y. –The New York state Senate today voted unanimously to approve S5183—a critical update to the New York Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill of Rights. The measure was previously approved by the state Assembly and now heads to the Governor's desk for final approval. The bipartisan bill, sponsored by Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, D-Forestburgh, and Sen. Kemp Hannon, R-Garden City, has the [support](#) of a diverse coalition of organizations across the state.

While New York has strong laws protecting breastfeeding mothers when they return to work, many mothers do not know about their rights. When they face trouble on the job they often either stop breastfeeding or are pushed out of their jobs illegally. In fact, 32% of new mothers give up breastfeeding less than seven weeks after returning to work. This measure adds workplace protections for nursing moms to the Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill of Rights, ensuring that new moms understand their rights in the workplace when they are in a maternal healthcare facility for labor and delivery, like a hospital. It is critical to reach mothers prenatally or immediately after delivery, well before they are in the midst of adding a new member to the family and planning their return to work. This bill is a simple, no-cost fix to ensure that pregnant and new mothers are educated about New York's workplace protections for breastfeeding moms.

“We applaud this important update to the Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill of Rights,” said Dina Bakst, Co-Founder & Co-President of [A Better Balance: The Work and Family Legal Center](#). “The law will ensure that women are clearly informed of their workplace rights if they choose to breastfeed. Many women will be able to make an informed choice about pumping at work once they know they have the law on their side. Without this clear information, there are often too many barriers, and some women stop breastfeeding at work earlier than they would otherwise.”

Specifically, this measure adds a sentence to the Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill of Rights explaining that new mothers have a right to reasonable unpaid breaks at work for expressing breast milk for up to three years following childbirth. The update also states that a woman's employer must make reasonable efforts to provide a private space for expressing milk, and may not discriminate against a mother for her decision to express breast milk at work. Complaints can be directed to the [Department of Labor](#).



the work and family legal center

80 Maiden Lane, Suite 606, New York, NY 10038 | t: 212.430.5982 | f: 212.430.5983 | info@abetterbalance.org | abetterbalance.org

###

A Better Balance is a national legal advocacy organization dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace and helping workers meet the conflicting demands of work and family.
