

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Christy Setzer, 202-506-6421

[christy@newheightscommunications.com](mailto:christy@newheightscommunications.com)

Elizabeth Gedmark, 615-915-2417

[egedmark@abetterbalance.org](mailto:egedmark@abetterbalance.org)

Melanie Boyer, 202-588-5180

[mboyer@nwlc.org](mailto:mboyer@nwlc.org)

**NEW CLAIMS FILED AGAINST WALMART  
FOR FAILING TO ACCOMMODATE PREGNANT WORKERS**

***National Women’s Law Center, A Better Balance, and Mehri & Skalet, PLLC, File EEOC Charge,  
Claim Wal-Mart Policies and Practices Continue to Discriminate Against Pregnant Workers***

Washington, DC— Three legal organizations that brought a class action complaint against Walmart earlier this year for discrimination against pregnant workers have filed a new EEOC charge against the superstore. The groups charge that while Walmart changed its policies to provide “reasonable accommodations” for pregnant workers with temporary disabilities, the policy change doesn’t go far enough. The EEOC charge comes just two weeks after the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Young v. United Parcel Service*, which addressed the scope of the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

“Walmart has made only the bare minimum of accommodations for its pregnant workers,” said Ellen Eardley, partner at Mehri & Skalet, a D.C.-based law firm. “Walmart’s policy accommodates women with disabilities caused by pregnancy, but in practice Walmart does nothing to accommodate the vast majority of pregnant women who are healthy, yet still may need a temporary change in duties. It’s not just women with disabilities who may need to avoid toxic chemicals during pregnancy, for example.”

The charge is on behalf of Candis Riggins, a former Walmart worker whose job responsibilities—including cleaning bathrooms with toxic chemicals—were causing her to become ill while she was pregnant. When Riggins asked for temporary relief of those duties, she was denied. Riggins called out sick a number of times, and was eventually fired.

In March, the groups filed an initial EEOC complaint on behalf of a nationwide class of women workers asserting that Walmart has a nationwide policy and practice of pregnancy discrimination based on its failure to make accommodations for pregnant workers who need them. Shortly thereafter, Walmart revised its written policy, stating that the store will provide reasonable accommodations for temporary disabilities caused by pregnancy. But Riggins claims Walmart denied her accommodations while she was pregnant even after the policy was changed.

The groups said today that Walmart’s written policy providing “reasonable accommodations” for temporary disabilities caused by pregnancy doesn’t go far enough. In order to comply with the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the superstore must make accommodations available to all pregnant workers, the advocates say.

The National Women’s Law Center, A Better Balance and Mehri & Skalet, PLLC, laid out their claims in a new charge, stating:

*Wal-Mart discriminated against Ms. Riggins because of her gender, including her pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, and because of her disability. Wal-Mart has engaged in a pattern or practice of gender discrimination against female sales associates and in policies or practices that have a disparate impact against women. Wal-Mart's treatment of Ms. Riggins does not comply with the law and confirms that adoption of the new policy has failed to ensure that Wal-Mart will treat pregnant associates in accordance with legal requirements. Ms. Riggins brings her charge of discrimination on behalf of herself and all similarly situated women.*

"I made it clear to my supervisors that I wanted to keep working and that I could do several other jobs well," said Riggins. "I just needed to keep away from the chemicals, but Walmart said 'No,' even though I know they gave light duty to a coworker of mine when he hurt his back. Finally, I was forced to choose between a healthy pregnancy and my paycheck. No pregnant worker should have to make that decision."

"What we're asking for is simple," said Dina Bakst, Co-Founder & Co-President of A Better Balance. "Walmart needs to rectify the situation for Candis and for everyone else who has been harmed by Walmart's practices. They need to train their managers on how to successfully end this discriminatory practice, and they need to meet with us to discuss an effective policy that treats all pregnant women the same as other workers who may need accommodations."

Added Emily Martin, Vice President and General Counsel at the National Women's Law Center, "The Pregnancy Discrimination Act mandates equal treatment, nothing less, and we will continue to fight until Walmart obeys the law in full. No woman should have to choose between her job and a healthy pregnancy. Walmart should heed the part of its slogan that says 'live better' by not making life worse for its pregnant employees."

# # #