

An Open Letter from Tennessee Business Leaders Urging Passage of the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520)

February 6, 2020

Dear Members of the Tennessee General Assembly,

As concerned Tennessee business leaders, we urge you to help boost our state's economy by passing the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520). This important legislation will provide much-needed clarity to employers and help pregnant women who need reasonable accommodations, like a stool to sit on or extra bathroom breaks, to remain healthy and safe on the job, unless it would create an undue hardship for the business.

Ensuring that pregnant employees receive the accommodations they need promotes healthier pregnancies and babies, which leads to lower healthcare costs for employers and the state.

As leaders of businesses both large and small from across our state, we know that the current patchwork of laws creates confusion and uncertainty. The Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act establishes one clear standard, allowing us to address accommodation requests quickly and informally.

Providing reasonable accommodations also keeps our valuable employees working and reduces turnover and training costs. These types of accommodations are temporary and can typically be provided for a very low cost or no cost at all.

Tennessee ranks 41st in the nation for the number of women participating in the labor force. Given our historically low unemployment rate and tight labor market, it is important to ensure that everyone who is willing and able to work can do so. In order for our businesses and economy to continue to grow and prosper, we must make it easier for women to join and remain in the workforce.

Twenty-seven states, including our neighbors in Kentucky and South Carolina, have already passed legislation to guarantee reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. We urge you to join our peers and reaffirm Tennessee's commitment to promoting healthy mothers and babies, streamlining regulations for businesses, and strengthening economic growth by supporting the Tennessee Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (HB 2708/SB 2520).

Sincerely,

Chambers of Commerce:

Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce

Knoxville Chamber of Commerce

Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce

Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

Businesses:

A Coulter Consulting | Chattanooga

Bail U Out Bonding | Nashville

Bliss Home | Knoxville, Nashville & Louisville, KY

Bridge Financial Planning | Chattanooga

Cafe Eclectic | Memphis

Claridy Communications | Chattanooga

Embellish | Chattanooga

exBREASTyourself Festival Pumping Suites | Gallatin

Firefly Social Media | Chattanooga

getFIT615 | Nashville

Inspire Chiropractic | Chattanooga

K:: A Boutique by Katherine Roberts | Chattanooga

Language South | Chattanooga

Matt Ferry Media | Murfreesboro

Pancake Pantry | Nashville

Parnassus Books | Nashville

Russell Marketing | Chattanooga

Second Story Real Estate | Chattanooga

Tennessee Reproductive Medicine: Infertility Treatment | Chattanooga

The Ornamentor | Chattanooga

The Otaku Group | Nashville

The Tap House, LLC | Chattanooga

Vector Printing | Chattanooga

Yassin's Falafel House | Knoxville