

Dear Senator Schumer,

As New York faith leaders representing a broad array of religious beliefs and faith traditions, we are proud supporters of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (H.R. 1065/S. 1486). We write to you today with a collective voice urging the Senate to pass the PWFA without delay.

Supporting pregnant and postpartum workers is a matter of religious, moral, and ethical concern. Our faith traditions affirm the dignity of pregnant individuals and the moral imperative of affording them the right to changes at work to preserve their health. We also affirm the dignity of work and the obligation to treat workers justly. It is immoral for an employer to force a worker to choose between a healthy pregnancy and earning a living.

This issue is of urgent importance. Pregnant and postpartum workers, especially women of color and low-income workers, continue to be denied reasonable accommodations—such as light duty, temporary transfers, schedule changes—needed to protect their health and the economic needs of their families. As the pandemic rages on, workplace accommodations can help pregnant workers—especially those in frontline jobs—avoid contracting this stubborn and dangerous virus.

Accommodations are especially important for women in physically demanding jobs. In lieu of reasonable accommodations at the workplace, many pregnant workers are forced to take unpaid leaves of absence, forcing them into financial dire straits. Others are forced to remain working to feed their families and face serious health consequences, including preterm birth and low-birth weight.

This legislation has strong bipartisan support as is proven by its passage through the House of Representatives and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. The Senate cannot miss this opportunity to show its full-throated support for pregnant and postpartum workers. Failing to bring the PWFA to a vote would be a moral failing. The Senate must protect pregnant workers and pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act now.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Rachel Timoner
Congregation Beth Elohim

Rabbi Dan Ross
Central Synagogue

Rabbi Gordon Tucker
Temple Israel Center, White Plains, NY
(Emeritus)

Rabbi Juliana Karol
Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Rabbi Lev Meirowitz Nelson
Flatbush Jewish Center

Rabbi Emily Cohen
West End Synagogue

Sr. Margaret Magee, OSF
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Our Lady of Grace Brooklyn, NY;
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Sr. Danielle Bonetti, CSJ
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Rabbi Lauren Grabelle Herrmann
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Rabbi Marla J. Feldman
Women of Reform Judaism

Rabbi Sue Oren

Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum
*Congregation Beit Simchat Torah; New York
Jewish Agenda*

Rabbi Matt Green
Congregation Beth Elohim, Brooklyn, NY

Rabbi Margo Hughes-Robinson
T'ruah: the Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

Rabbi Michael Fessler
Temple Beth-El

Rabbi Deborah S. Goldberg
Congregation Rodeph Shalom

Rabbi Barat Ellman
*T'ruah: the Rabbinic Call for Human Rights;
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice*

Rabbi Rachel Grant Meyer

Rabbi Rachel Gross-Prinz

Rabbi Yael Hammerman

Rabbi Rachel Goldenberg

Rabbi Bryan Mann

Rabbi Benjamin Spratt

Rabbi Dena Klein

Rabbi Rebecca W. Sirbu

Rabbi David Rosenn

Rabbi Andrue Kahn

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*Justice & Peace Office Coordinator, Sisters of
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Dominican Sisters of Sparkill

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Sr. Maryann McHugh, CSJ
Brentwood, NY

Sr. Mary Ellen Manz, MM
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Sr. Maureen Ashe, CSJ
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Sr. Janet Kinney, CSJ
Brentwood, NY

Sr. Mary Shaw, ASC

Sr. Mary Ellen Kempken, MM

Rabbi Shelley Kovar Becker

Cantor Shayna De Lowe
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Daniel Rous
Retired Cantor

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The Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
First Presbyterian Union Church, Owego, NY

Pastor Bruce Gillette
First Presbyterian Union Church, Owego, NY

Rev. Thia Reggio
Second Presbyterian Church NYC

Rev. Hilary Island-Thomas
Charlotte Valley Presbyterian Church

Rev. Robin Lostetter
PCUSA, retired

Rev. Earl Arnold
First Union Presbyterian Church of Owego, NY
Presbyterian Peace Network for Korea

The Reverend Peter Cook
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Jane Wakeman, Deaconess
Golden Hill UMC

Sr. Theresa Baldini, MM

Sr. Martha Bourne, MM

Sr. Theresa Kastner, MM

Sr. Joan Gallagher, CSJ

Sr. Margaret Hanley, CSJ

Sr. Jean Fallon, MM

Sr. Virginia Wilkinson, PBVM

Sr. Carol De Angelo, SC

Sr. Susan Gubbins, MM

Sr. Anastasia M. Connor, MM

Sr. Nancy Fackner, CSJ

Sr. Claudette LaVerdiere, MM

Sr. Carolyn Moritz, MM

Sr. Grace Avila, CSJ

Sr. Margaret Anella, CSJ

Sr. Ann Gray, DW

Sr. Susanne Lachapelle, LSAFHS, CHN

Sr. Margaret O'Brien

Sr. Pat McDonnell, CSJ

Sr. Shirley King, MM

Sr. Faith Colligan, DC

Sr. Florence Mallon, SC

Sr. Margaret Saich, OP

Sr. Claire Regan, SC

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Church Women United in New York State

Farina Mirza
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