

August 30, 2022

Dear Senators Warnock and Ossoff,

As Georgia advocates who are passionately invested in improving maternal and infant health outcomes and promoting the economic security for families in our state, we thank you for your support of the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (S. 1486). **We urge you to call on Senate leadership to bring this critical maternal and infant health measure to a vote in the Senate immediately!**

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would enable employees to safely ask for and receive accommodations for limitations arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, including lactation, such as additional bathroom breaks, break time to express breast milk, a water bottle, lifting restrictions, or access to a stool, unless it would pose an undue hardship for their employer's business. Although most pregnant workers can expect a routine pregnancy and healthy birth, some pregnant individuals might need minor adjustments in their work activities to prevent adverse pregnancy outcomes, including preterm birth or miscarriage. We frequently hear from those who make the difficult decision to request assistance at work and risk retaliation, being forced onto unpaid leave months before their due date, or even termination, without a clear legal protection backing up their requests.

Georgia consistently ranks among the highest maternal mortality and preterm birth rates across the nation, with “Black women 2.3x more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women,”¹ and “the preterm birth rate among Black women [being] 45% higher than the rate among all other women.”² Unfortunately, too many workers, particularly pregnant women of color who work in low-wage jobs which are physically demanding, face great barriers to requesting and receiving minor, reasonable accommodations due to pervasive racism and sexism in the workplace.³ According to a recent report, “[Centering the Experiences of Black Mamas in the Workplace: How the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Can Support Black Maternal Health.](#)” the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would “help remove one of the many barriers Black pregnant people face at work by ensuring they are afforded immediate relief under the law, and not thrown into financial dire straits for needing pregnancy accommodation[s].”⁴

No pregnant worker should have to choose between providing for her family and maintaining a healthy pregnancy, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act would protect all pregnant and postpartum workers. **We urge you to reaffirm Georgia's commitment to promoting healthy mothers and babies and strengthening economic growth by calling on Senate leadership to bring the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act to a vote in the Senate immediately.**

Sincerely,

¹ Georgia Dept. of Public Health, *Georgia: Maternal Mortality*, <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/maternal-mortality-factsheet-2015-2017-data/download>.

² Peristats: Georgia, March of Dimes, <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/tools/reportcard.aspx?frmodrc=1®=13>.

³ A Better Balance, Addressing Our Nation's Care Crisis Means Understanding Black Women's History & Present, Feb. 25, 2021, <https://www.abetterbalance.org/addressing-our-nations-care-crisis-means-understanding-black-womens-history-present/>.

⁴ Sarah Brafman, Kameron Dawson, Renee Smith, and Clarke Wheeler, A Better Balance & Black Mamas Matter Alliance, *Centering the Experiences of Black Mamas in the Workplace: How The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Can Support Black Maternal Health*, (May 2022), <https://www.abetterbalance.org/centering-black-mamas-pwfa>.

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
A Better Balance Southern Office
9 to 5 Georgia
ACLU of GA
Ahana Birth Services, LLC
Allure Birth Concierge
Black Child Development Institute (BCDI)-Atlanta
Black Mamas Matter Alliance
Conscientious Consulting
Cookie La Doula, LLC
GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students
Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Georgians for a Healthy Future
InnerLight Holistic Doula & Perinatal Consulting
Kuluntu Reproductive Justice Center
March of Dimes- Georgia
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
SisterSong
YWCA of Greater Atlanta