The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
United States House of Representatives
2332 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC  20515-3214

November 10, 2009

Dear Congresswoman Maloney:

We, the undersigned organizations, would like to thank you for introducing The Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009 in the House. By leading the charge in Congress to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding, you have demonstrated a clear commitment to our nation’s mothers and children.

Human milk is the optimal source of nutrition for infants, and the United States Breastfeeding Committee joins the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in recommending that infants be exclusively breastfed for six months, and continue to breastfeed for the first year of life and as long afterwards as mutually desired by mother and infant.

As you know, the evidence for the value of breastfeeding to children’s and women’s health is scientific, solid, and continually being reaffirmed by new research. Compared with formula-fed children, those who are breastfed have a reduced risk of ear, skin, stomach, and respiratory infections; diarrhea; sudden infant death syndrome; and necrotizing enterocolitis. In the longer term, breastfed children have a reduced risk of obesity, type 1 and 2 diabetes, asthma, and childhood leukemia. Women who breastfed their children have a reduced long-term risk of diabetes and breast and ovarian cancers. And studies are looking at the effects of breastfeeding on still other diseases and conditions in which breastfeeding may reduce the risk to mothers and infants.

Breastfeeding also provides a range of economic and environmental benefits for society. The future prosperity of our country greatly depends on the productivity of women, as workers and as mothers. Women’s economic security and the health—emotional and physical—of mothers and families translate directly into the potential of our future workforce and the vigor of our economy.

Again, we applaud your leadership in introducing The Breastfeeding Promotion Act and stand ready to help you achieve its passage. If you wish to draw upon our assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Renner with the United States Breastfeeding Committee at mrenner@usbreastfeeding.org.

Sincerely,

Joan Younger Meek, MD, MS, RD, FAAP, FABM, IBCLC
Chair
United States Breastfeeding Committee
The United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) is an independent nonprofit coalition of 41 nationally influential professional, educational, and governmental organizations. Representing over half a million concerned professionals and the families they serve, USBC and its member organizations share a common mission to improve the Nation's health by working collaboratively to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding. For more information on USBC, visit www.usbreastfeeding.org.

CO-SIGNERS:

National Organizations:

Academy for Educational Development
Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine
African-American Breastfeeding Alliance
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Breastfeeding Institute
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians
American Nurses Association
American Public Health Association
AnotherLook
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States
Association of State & Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Baby-Friendly USA
Bright Future Lactation Resource Centre, Ltd.
Carolina (Global) Breastfeeding Institute,
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Coalition for Improving Maternity Services
Healthy Children Project
Human Milk Banking Association of North America
International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners
International Lactation Consultant Association
Lamaze International
National Alliance for Breastfeeding Advocacy:
Research, Education, and Legal
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition
National WIC Association
U.S. Lactation Consultant Association
Wellstart International

State-Based Organizations:

Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition
Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware
Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon
Breastfeeding Taskforce of Nevada
Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates
Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition
Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition
DC Breastfeeding Coalition
Florida Breastfeeding Coalition
Guam Breastfeeding Coalition
Hawaii Breastfeeding Coalition
Louisiana Breastfeeding Coalition
Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition
Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition
Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition
Missouri Breastfeeding Coalition
New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition
New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition
North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition
Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance
Puerto Rico Breastfeeding Committee
Rhode Island Breastfeeding Coalition
South Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition
Texas Breastfeeding Coalition
Tennessee Breastfeeding Coalition
Wyoming Breastfeeding Coalition