



United States Breastfeeding  
COMMITTEE

PROTECTING • PROMOTING • SUPPORTING

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
United States Senate  
107 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

November 10, 2009

Dear Senator Merkley:

We, the undersigned organizations, would like to thank you for introducing The Breastfeeding Promotion Act of 2009 in the Senate. 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](mailto:mrenner@usbreastfeeding.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Younger Meek".

Joan Younger Meek, MD, MS, RD, FAAP, FABM, IBCLC  
Chair  
United States Breastfeeding Committee

2025 M Street, NW, Suite 800 • Washington DC 20036 • Phone: (202) 367-1132 • FAX: (202) 367-2132  
E-mail: [office@usbreastfeeding.org](mailto:office@usbreastfeeding.org) • Web site: [www.usbreastfeeding.org](http://www.usbreastfeeding.org)

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](http://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