



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

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### **S. B. No. 194 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE POSTPONEMENT OF JURY DUTY FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS**

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The Department of Public Health supports Senate Bill Number 194. The bill allows a jury administrator to grant a postponement of jury duty for no more than twelve months to any mother who is breastfeeding her child or expressing breast milk for her child.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, then the introduction of appropriate complimentary foods. Breastfeeding is recommended for at least 12 months, and thereafter for as long as mutually desired. Postponing jury duty for 12 months will allow the breastfeeding dyad (mother and child pair) to more easily attain this recommendation and avoid any unnecessary separation that could lead to early weaning and reduced duration of breastfeeding. Further, Healthy People 2020 Objectives on breastfeeding duration at 6 months and 12 months are 60.6% and 34.1%, respectively. Prolonged separation of mom and infant is a barrier to reaching these national breastfeeding duration targets. This proposed legislation also supports the specific implementation strategy under Action 1 of the 2011 *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding* related to giving mothers the time and flexibility to breastfeed and provide mothers who choose to breastfeed the opportunity to maintain lactation for as long as possible. The revision of the AAP policy statement on Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk released earlier this week states that evidence based studies confirm that breastfeeding should not be considered as a lifestyle choice but rather as a basic health issue.

For more information, please see the executive summary of the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding, available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/breastfeeding/executivesummary.pdf>

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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