
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5600

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development
(originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Kohl-Welles, Benton,
Keiser, Kastama, Spanel, Fairley and Brown)

READ FIRST TIME 03/02/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to studying breastfeeding women in the workplace;
2 creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that breastfeeding
5 provides a range of benefits for the infant's growth, immunity, and
6 development. Breastfeeding improves maternal health and contributes
7 economic benefits to the family, health care system, and workplace.
8 Employers benefit when their employees breastfeed. Breastfed infants
9 are sick less often; therefore maternal absenteeism from work is lower
10 in companies with established lactation programs. Additionally,
11 employee medical costs are lower and employee productivity is higher.
12 Nine other states, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois,
13 Minnesota, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Texas, have laws relating to
14 breastfeeding in the workplace. Whether employers should be required
15 to accommodate breastfeeding mothers is a matter of debate.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A study shall be conducted by a joint task
17 force comprised of the following: Two senators to be appointed by the
18 majority leader of the senate; two senators to be appointed by the

1 minority leader of the senate; two representatives to be appointed by
2 the speaker of the house of representatives; and two representatives to
3 be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives.
4 The task force shall be governed by cochairs, one to be selected by the
5 majority leader of the senate, and the other to be selected by the
6 speaker of the house of representatives. The joint task force shall
7 consult with an advisory committee consisting of specialists from: The
8 department of health; the department of labor and industries; the
9 employment security department; and such private sector and labor
10 representatives as the task force shall select.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The joint task force shall study the
12 prevalence of breastfeeding women in the workplace. The study should
13 address:

- 14 (1) The number of breastfeeding women currently in the workplace;
- 15 (2) How the employers accommodate these women's needs to breastfeed
16 or express breastmilk;
- 17 (3) The number of employers that have lactation policies and what
18 the policies consist of;
- 19 (4) The types of facilities provided by employers who accommodate
20 lactating women;
- 21 (5) The cost of accommodating lactating women in the workplace; and
- 22 (6) The employer benefits, if any, that the accommodation of
23 lactating women yielded.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The joint task force is to report its
25 findings to the legislature by December 1, 2005.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act expire
27 January 1, 2006.

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