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## Rep. Alma Adams Joins Bipartisan Congressional Maternal Health Leaders on the PUMP for Nursing Act

Office of Congresswoman Alma Adams [repalmaadamsnc12@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, February 14, 2020 3:51 PM

To: Steve Johnston



## Rep. Alma Adams Joins Bipartisan Congressional Maternal Health Leaders on the PUMP for Nursing Act

Washington, D.C. – **Founding co-chairs of the Black Maternal Health Caucus Alma Adams (D-NC) and Lauren Underwood (D-IL)** as well as founding co-chairs of the Congressional Maternity Care Caucus Congresswomen Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA) and Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) and have signed on as co-leads of Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY)'s bill, H.R. 5592, the PUMP (Providing Urgent Maternal Protections) for Nursing Mothers Act. This bill will close unintentional gaps in the Break Time for Nursing Mothers Act to ensure that millions of working mothers have the access and protections they need to breastfeed for as long as they choose to do so.

“As the co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, I know how important it is to break down the barriers that hold women back from the best possible health outcomes,” said **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12)**. “The PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act will protect and support working moms that have been forced to choose between breastfeeding and earning a paycheck. Every major medical authority strongly encourages breastfeeding for at least the first year of life, as it provides significant health and nutritional benefits to both the mother and infant. Nursing parents should not be punished for making the best choices for their children.”

“New moms returning to the workforce after childbirth should not face barriers to trying to pump at work. Yet each year, millions of working moms are denied this basic protection,” said **Rep. Underwood**. “I am proud to lead the PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act and thankful for the leadership of Chairwoman Maloney in helping ensure returning to work is not a barrier to mothers making the best choice for themselves and their families.”

“Nursing mothers and their families suffer when they are not afforded basic accommodations at work to pump breastmilk in clean, private spaces. I’m thrilled to be joined by Reps. Herrera Beutler, Roybal-Allard, Adams, and Underwood as we fight to make sure all working moms have the ability and workplace protections to breastfeed if they want to,” said **Rep. Maloney**. “No new mother should be forced to choose between breastfeeding and earning a paycheck.”

“I understand what it’s like to balance work and raise young children. Protecting the ability of moms to breastfeed is key, and working moms shouldn’t have to choose between their jobs and breastfeeding – they deserve access to safe, private places to pump while at work,” said **Rep. Herrera Beutler**. “We know breastfeeding has continually proven to help build life-long health and wellness for moms and growing children – including reducing the risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and breast and ovarian cancers. This research underscores the need to protect working moms’ right to breastfeed, and it’s why I’m proud to help lead this bipartisan legislation so moms in Southwest Washington can provide for their families health and financial security.”

“Decades of research have irrefutably established that breastfeeding leads to better health outcomes and lower health costs for infants. However, despite this overwhelming evidence, US breastfeeding rates continue to fall short of clinical practice guidelines, with less than 58% of mothers still breastfeeding at six months postpartum,” said **Rep. Roybal-Allard**. “For mothers who have to separate themselves from their infants in

order to return to work or school, government support for these mothers to keep breastfeeding and have protected time for pumping can mean the difference between continued breastfeeding and having to switch to formula earlier than a mother would like. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Maternity Care Caucus, I am proud to join my colleagues in supporting the PUMP Act, which will close unintended gaps in breastfeeding protections, and help more working mothers successfully breastfeed their infants for as long as these mothers desire.”

Background:

The PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act would strengthen the 2010 Break Time law by:

- Closing the coverage gap. The bill would protect 9 million employees unintentionally excluded from the 2010 Break Time law by extending the law’s protections to cover salaried employees as well as other categories of employees currently exempted from protections, such as teachers.
- Providing employers clarity on paid and unpaid pumping time. The bill leaves in place existing law protecting many salaried workers from having their pay docked, and clarifies that employers must pay an hourly employee for any time spent pumping if the employee is also working.
- Providing remedies for nursing mothers. The bill would ensure that nursing mothers have access to remedies that are available for other violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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