**Please send a support letter for SB 142 – On letterhead by March 1, 2019**

**Send by email to: Martha.Gutierrez@sen.ca.gov; copy: Cassidy.Denny@sen.ca.gov;** **jgerry@legalaidatwork.org**

Senator Jerry Hill

Chair of the Committee on Labor, Public Employment and Retirement

State Capitol, Room 545

Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

c/o Martha Gutierrez

**RE: Support – Workplace Lactation Accommodation SB 142 (Wiener)**

Dear Senator Hill:

Insert Your Organization’s/Your Name is in strong support of SB 142 because no one who chooses to breastfeed should have to worry about access to a clean, private space to pump milk, and no one should have to fear negative consequences at work just to feed their baby. Businesses also deserve guidance on how to support lactating employees.

Parents are better able to start breastfeeding and keep at it when the workplace they return to provides proper support and resources. Existing law requires employers to provide new parents with time and space to express breastmilk, but these vague requirements are insufficient to offer real support to most workers, particularly low-wage workers. Indeed, according to California Department of Public Health data, a third of working parents report that they have no workplace breastfeeding support and parents with lower household income are less likely to have workplace breastfeeding support than those with a higher income.

The lack of supportive workplace policies deprives far too many parents and babies of the invaluable health effects of breastfeeding. Parents who breastfeed have a lower risk of getting breast and ovarian cancers, type 2 diabetes, postpartum depression and cardiovascular disease and breastfed babies are less likely to develop asthma, ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, and obesity. But parents and babies can only enjoy these benefits if workplaces support breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding is also good for business. Companies with lactation support programs have experienced higher productivity, employee job satisfaction, morale, and enhanced loyalty to the company. Moreover, if 90% of California women were able to breastfeed according to medical recommendations, $224,824,908 million of direct health care costs would be saved annually.

SB 142 ensures all breastfeeding parents have the workplace supports they need by requiring employers to have a written lactation policy and ensuring all lactation spaces meet minimum requirements to create a safe and comfortable space for lactating employees. These supports will ensure that working parents never have to choose between continuing to breastfeed and returning to work.

Optional: 1-3 sentences (or more!) on why this is important to you/your organization and/or members and community. We thank you for your support in ensuring the health and well-being of California families.

Sincerely,

cc: Cassidy Denny, Senator Wiener’s Office, Cassidy.Denny@sen.ca.gov

 Jenna Gerry, jgerry@legalaidatwork.org