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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ROSA L. DeLAURO

3RD DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Dear Attendees:

Welcome to the Second Annual Summit on Breastfeeding. I am so sorry I could not attend. I applaud your hard work, your enthusiasm, and your continued advocacy on behalf of America's mothers and children, and I look forward to reading the report from the convention.

We know for a fact that breastfeeding contributes to healthier children, reduces the risk of common childhood illnesses, and reduces the risk of childhood obesity.

In fact, according to a study published last April, the *Journal of Pediatrics* concluded that if 90% of US families could comply with the recommendations by doctors to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months, the United States would save \$13 billion per year and prevent an excess 911 deaths.

That is why, among the many benefits for children and families in the comprehensive health reform law we passed last March, we included an initiative to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to require employers with more than 50 employees to provide break time and a place for breastfeeding mothers to express milk.

This is an incredibly important provision that has a lot of promise for improving work-life balance and improving the nation's health. In fact, the health services company CIGNA established a breastfeeding-friendly Working Well Moms program that was studied by UCLA about 10 years ago. Researchers found that this program increased the duration of breastfeeding, reduced socioeconomic disparities in breastfeeding, reduced pharmacy costs over the infant's first year of life, and resulted in a 77% reduction in lost work time due to infant illness, with annual savings of \$60,000. So getting similar programs up and running all across the country will help families stay healthier and workers become more productive.

It is exactly these sorts of long-overdue, common-sense reforms that make up the backbone of our new health care law. Along with the increased access to breastfeeding within, this law offers all Americans a comprehensive benefits package that also includes access to maternity care, wellness care, and evidence-based preventive services such as mammograms and flu shots. It makes health insurance better, more affordable, and more available to all Americans.

With health care reform now the law of the land, I plan to continue working to pass the family-friendly work and health policies that promote breastfeeding and keep our children healthy. And to do so, I will continue to rely on your insights and expertise. So thank you for all that you do on behalf of American families, and I look forward to working with you again in the future.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosa DeLauro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rosa DeLauro