

April 8, 2015

The Honorable James Oscarson  
Chair  
Committee on Health & Human Services  
Nevada State Assembly  
401 S. Carson Street, Room 3138  
Carson City, NV 89701

Re: Nevada Assembly Bill 306 - Support

Dear Chair Oscarson:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and medical student members, I am writing to express our support of Assembly Bill (A.B.) 306, legislation to promote workplace policies to support breastfeeding.

The AMA has long-standing policy recognizing breastfeeding as the optimal form of nutrition for most infants and recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about six months, followed by continued breastfeeding for one year or longer as mutually desired by mother and infant. The American Academy of Pediatrics,<sup>1</sup> the World Health Organization<sup>2</sup> and the Institute of Medicine concur with this recommendation.<sup>3</sup>

Both mothers and children benefit from breast milk. Breast milk contains antibodies that protect infants from bacteria and viruses. Breastfed children have fewer ear, respiratory and urinary tract infections and have diarrhea less often. Infants who are exclusively breastfed tend to need fewer health care visits, prescriptions and hospitalizations resulting in a lower total medical care cost compared to never-breastfed infants. Breastfeeding also provides long-term preventive effects for the mother, including an earlier return to pre-pregnancy weight and a reduced risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer and osteoporosis. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 77 percent of mothers start breastfeeding immediately after birth, but only about 16 percent of those mothers are breastfeeding exclusively six months later.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AAP Section on Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk. *Pediatrics* Vol. 129 No. 3 March 1, 2012 pp. e827-e841 at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/3/e827.full?sid=ee79f8ed-6856-4f36-9ef2-d83a88178219>

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. The optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding: report of an expert consultation. at: [www.who.int/nutrition/publications/optimal\\_duration\\_of\\_exc\\_bfeeding\\_report\\_eng.pdf](http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/optimal_duration_of_exc_bfeeding_report_eng.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Medicine. Early childhood obesity prevention policies. June 23, 2011. Available at: [www.iom.edu/obesityyoungchildren](http://www.iom.edu/obesityyoungchildren)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2013breastfeedingreportcard.pdf>

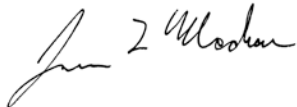
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In order for mothers to continue breastfeeding, and reap the benefits of fully breastfed infants, the AMA recommends the adoption of employer programs which support breastfeeding mothers so that they may safely and privately express breast milk at work or take time to feed their infants.

By enacting A.B. 306, Nevada lawmakers can take positive steps to improve the health of both mothers and infants by allowing local boards of health to develop a mediation process to allow evidence-based practices on breastfeeding to be more equitably enforced in Nevada's workplaces.

We thank you for your consideration of our views on this issue, and we hope that this background information is helpful in your deliberations on A.B. 306. If you need further information, please contact Carrie Armour, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center, at [carrie.armour@ama-assn.org](mailto:carrie.armour@ama-assn.org) or (312) 464-4039.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James L. Madara".

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Members of the House Health & Wellness Committee  
Nevada State Medical Association