

**AAP Headquarters**

141 Northwest Point Blvd
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1019
Phone: 847/434-4000
Fax: 847/434-8000
E-mail: kidsdocs@aap.org
www.aap.org

Reply to**Department of Federal Affairs**

Homer Building, Suite 400 N
601 13th St NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202/347-8600
Fax: 202/393-6137
E-mail: kids1st@aap.org

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June 18, 2015

The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
U.S. House of Representatives
104 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Duckworth:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 64,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical subspecialists, I write to thank you for introducing the *Friendly Airports for Mothers Act*, H.R. 2530.

The AAP strongly recommends breastfeeding as the preferred feeding method for all infants, including preterm newborn infants. Breastfeeding has proven to have numerous health benefits for both mother and child. Studies show that children who are not breastfed have higher rates of mortality, meningitis, some types of cancers, asthma and other respiratory illnesses, bacterial and viral infections, ear infections, juvenile diabetes, some chronic liver diseases, allergies and obesity. Due to the resounding evidence of improved child health and well-being, AAP recommends that mothers breastfeed exclusively for the first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding for at least the first year of a child's life as complementary foods are introduced.

H.R. 2530 would require all large and medium hub airports in the U.S. to provide a private space in each terminal for mothers to express breastmilk, enabling traveling mothers to more easily breastfeed. This provision would ensure that mothers who travel would have access to a clean and private place to breastfeed or pump breastmilk in an airport.

The AAP appreciates your commitment to promoting breastfeeding and is pleased to support the *Friendly Airports for Mothers Act*. We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the health of all our nation's children. If you have any questions feel free to contact Tamar Magarik Haro in our Washington, DC office at tharo@aap.org or 202-347-8600.

Sincerely,

Sandra G. Hassink, MD, FAAP
President