

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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May 17, 2016

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler
United States House of Representatives
1130 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Herrera Beutler:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a professional organization of 64,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write to express our appreciation for your efforts to ensure that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) provides adequate support and accommodation for breastfeeding mothers.

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 about the first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding for at least the first year of a child's life as complementary foods are introduced.

Although TSA already permits parents traveling with infants to carry breast milk and formula on board planes, many parents encounter barriers when traveling with these liquids. The important efforts you've undertaken would help ensure that the TSA is providing ongoing training to its agents to ensure that current guidelines are consistently enforced, thereby helping to guarantee that parents are able to carry the supplies they need to care for their children while traveling.

The Academy is grateful to you for your commitment to the safety and well-being of infants and children and we look forward to working with you and the TSA to ensure consistent and appropriate training and policies that accommodate pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Remley".

Karen Remley, MD, MBA, MPH, FAAP
CEO/ Executive Director

KR/mrc