



Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to speak on behalf of HB 34.

As a mother, and now grandmother, I was surprised to hear of this issue. There are few exemptions to jury duty and a mother nursing her child is apparently not one of them. Nursing is a critical bonding time during the early development of a child. This bond is not only good for the emotional, mental and physical development of a child, but it is also beneficial to the mother as well.

Mothers that nurse their child for 12 months or longer will reduce the mother's chance of breast cancer and ovarian cancer by 28%.¹Type 2 Diabetes risk is reduced by 4 to 12% for each year a mother nurses, and cardiovascular disease risk goes down 10% when the mother nurses for a year.²

Health benefits are also extended to the child.

Babies who are nursed are 36% less likely to succumb to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS. Breastfeeding reduces gastrointestinal infections for the infant by 64%.³ Middle ear inflammation is reduced by 50% if the infant is breastfed for 3 months or longer. Childhood and adult obesity are reduced by 15-30% if the infant is breastfed.⁴

The benefits of nursing go way beyond simply providing nourishment for a child. These reasons, and more, make HB 34 a vital piece of legislation to support the development of infants. And truthfully, this legislation is quite simple; all a nursing mother needs to do is submit a signed affidavit to the court of her status and she will be exempted from the jury duty.

Current law already includes exemptions for reasons such as age and illness, to name a few. In my mind, it seems this is a simple issue that may have been overlooked when original exemptions were created and Representative Klopfenstein and myself want to ensure this problem is corrected.

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to speak on HB 34, a vital bill for moms and babies, and ask for your full support. Representative Klopfenstein and myself welcome any questions you may have.

¹ (Babic, Sasamoto, & Rosner, 2020)

² (Gunderson, 2008)

³ (Victora, et al., 2016)

⁴ (Victora, et al., 2016)

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