



# WREN

Women's  
Rights &  
Empowerment  
Network

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Visit [scwren.org](http://scwren.org) and join the movement.
- Share this information with friends and community members.
- Keep up-to-date with this and similar legislation by following WREN on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
- Invest in WREN at [scwren.org/donate](http://scwren.org/donate).

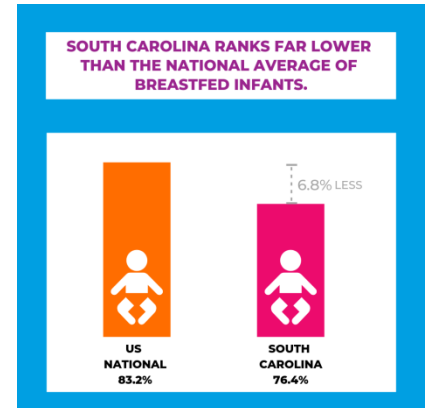
## THE POLICY

### South Carolina Lactation Support Act (H.3200 & S.406)

## OVERVIEW

The South Carolina Lactation Support Act builds on the South Carolina Pregnancy Accommodations Act by providing more people with the right to break time and private space to express milk in their workplaces. The Act provides an opportunity to support the health and economic well-being of women and children in South Carolina.

- Breastfeeding provides essential nutrition for infants, helps prevent disease and infection, and improves survival rates during the first year of life. Breastfeeding can protect children against asthma, allergies, and bone loss later in life.
- Breastfeeding also reduces mothers' risk of postpartum depression and breast and ovarian cancer.<sup>1</sup>
- Many women who return to work discontinue breastfeeding early because of lack of resources or support in the workplace.
- Regular "pumping" breaks based on the baby's feeding schedule are necessary to avoid severe pain, risk of infection, risk to milk supply, and other complications.
- South Carolina ranks far lower than the national average of breastfed infants.<sup>2</sup>
- Nearly 40,000 South Carolina women<sup>3</sup> give birth each year, and two-thirds of women in the state are employed.<sup>4</sup> But most aren't getting the support they need to express milk at work.



- Providing time to pump helps reduce absenteeism and improves employee retention.
- This act will require employers to make already existing spaces available to workers to use for expressing milk.
- Breast milk must be prepared and handled in a sanitary space - not a bathroom.
- Many states, including Tennessee and Georgia, already have break time laws for expressing milk in their state labor codes that apply to all employers.

<sup>1</sup> South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. (2018). *Breastfeeding*. Retrieved from <https://scdhec.gov/health/family-planning/breastfeeding>.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). *Breastfeeding Report Card United States, 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/2018breastfeedingreportcard.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Martin, J. A., Hamilton, B. E., Osterman, M. J., Driscoll, A. K., & Drake, P. (2018). *Births: Final Data for 2016/ National Vital Statistics Reports*. Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67\\_01.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67_01.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Geographies: South Carolina, Table B13012. Retrieved from [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_17\\_5YR\\_B13012&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_5YR_B13012&prodType=table).