



Connecticut Education Association

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Testimony of
Ray Rossomando
Connecticut Education Association

Before the
Labor Committee

Re:
SB 1030 AAC Breastfeeding in the Workplace
HB 7053 An Act Establishing a Working Group to Develop Uniform Statutory
Definitions of
"First Responder" and "Essential Worker"

February 27, 2025

Good Evening, Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, and distinguished members of the Labor Committee. My name is Ray Rossomando, and I'm the Director of Policy, Research, and Government Relations for the Connecticut Education Association. CEA is an organization representing active and retired teachers from over 155 school districts across Connecticut.

We testify today in support of SB 1030 and HB 7053.

SB 1030 AAC Breastfeeding in the Workplace

We commend the committee for the work it has done over the years to provide more sensible policies that help women balance their careers with motherhood. Passage of PA 21-27 was a great step forward in supporting mothers in the workplace. At the time the original legislation was heard, we supported it, and further pointed out the unique circumstances faced by mothers of infants who teach in our schools. In fact, a survey of our members at that time indicated that finding a suitable place and time to express milk was difficult for a majority of mothers of newborns teaching in our

schools. We have also advocated that the language clearly enables employees are provided time to express milk multiple times in their workday. Teachers spend the vast majority of their day overseeing children. Teachers cannot take break times at times of their choice. They cannot choose when to take lunch, and lunch periods are usually only 30 minutes long and often spent tending to administrative tasks or with students looking for guidance or company. What time teachers do have, such as prep periods, is determined based on master scheduling of the student day, which often conflicts with the timeliness for expressing milk.

We believe that the proposed language addresses the concerns we raised and we thank the committee for bringing it forward for public hearing.

HB 7053 An Act Establishing a Working Group to Develop Uniform Statutory Definitions of "First Responder" and "Essential Worker."

CEA supports HB 7053 in concept, but requests that a working group established to define the terms "First Responder" and "Essential Worker" must include the voices of those who served in these roles during the COVID 19 pandemic.

During the COVID pandemic, our communities recognized first responders and essential workers as heroes. We all learned just how integral to our everyday lives so many job roles can be. Including the voices of workers from essential occupations, including educators, who brought us through the pandemic would better inform the work of this group.

To that end, CEA ask committee members to include in the bill specific opportunities for input from organizations representing occupations that were previously identified as First Responders" or "Essential Workers."

Thank you.