



# California Breastfeeding Coalition

Working Together for a Healthier California

The [California Breastfeeding Coalition](#) stands firm in our commitment to improve the health and well-being of Californians through the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding and human milk. The [NYTimes article](#) - US Opposition to Breastfeeding Resolution - was a stark reminder of the importance of our work and the work of all the breastfeeding coalitions and organizations in California and throughout the US. The reported bullying and threatening tactics used by the US Delegation to weaken and block the [Infant and Young Child Feeding Resolution](#) were disappointing to read. Breastfeeding provides many [short and long-term health and economic benefits](#) for mothers, infants, families, and society. Going forward, we call on US government officials to fully support any and all global breastfeeding resolutions presented during the [World Health Assembly](#).

The [NYTimes article](#) was further confirmation that breastfeeding is political. This point often makes some breastfeeding advocates uncomfortable; however it is important for all of us to understand the impact and implications of such political decisions. International policies affect breastfeeding families in California and throughout the US. The work of the World Health Organization/UNICEF in developing evidence-based policies, protocols and programs underlies the [California Department of Public Health](#) supported breastfeeding goals in California. For example:

1. The WHO/UNICEF's [10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding](#) and [Baby-Friendly Hospitals Initiative](#) are the model policy framework from which our groundbreaking laws, [SB502](#) and [SB402](#) derive. The [International Code of Marketing Breast-Milk Substitutes](#) is a vital component to this important policy work in California. Protecting all individuals from the nefarious and predatory tactics of artificial infant milk marketing has critical and profound implications on a person's breastfeeding success.
2. California leads the nations with the strongest [legal protections for breastfeeding](#) women and lactating individuals, with access to pregnancy accommodations and disability rights, protected status under our Civil Rights laws, public and employment lactation accommodation rights and paid family leave, all of which are components that have been called for in the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These protections are instrumental to improving breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity rates.

3. [California's breastfeeding rates](#) have improved steadily as a result of this policy framework which has been promoted by the [CDC](#), the [US Surgeon General](#), [US Department of Health and Human Services](#) and the [US Department of Agriculture, through the WIC program](#).

Therefore, we rely on our Federal partners to work collaboratively with the the World Health Assembly to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. To be clear, supporting breastfeeding does not equate to denying or limiting access to formula. We can be supportive of global and domestic breastfeeding efforts and also support individuals and families who supplement with formula. Moreover, when our Federal partners work to weaken critical global breastfeeding initiatives, California families are affected.

This is why our collective work and support of breastfeeding initiatives throughout California is critical. Here are the actions we are supporting to help protect and promote breastfeeding in California. We urge all of our partners in California to support this work today.

- [Raising our voice](#): We are requesting that our Federal legislators commit to protect, promote and support breastfeeding, by requesting that our Federal Legislators hold hearings and demand an explanation and accountability for the behavior demonstrated by the Department of Health and Human Services US delegation and request that all future delegations uphold the [WHA resolution](#) to support breastfeeding unequivocally, [putting people before profits](#).
- [Resolution](#): We are supporting Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 234 to continue to protect, promote and support breastfeeding for California families in celebration of World Breastfeeding Week this August. It proclaims August 2018 as Breastfeeding Awareness Month in California,
- [Senate Bill 937](#): We are co-sponsors of this bill that will strengthen Lactation Accommodation laws including a stronger definition of how employers must provide appropriate accommodations for employed breastfeeding people.
- [Assembly Bill 2785](#): We support this bill which will close the gap for California students in higher education and will require those institutions to provide appropriate accommodations for breastfeeding college students, similar to the work we did for K-12 Students under [AB 302](#).
- [Assembly Bill 2507](#): We support this bill which will require appropriate support for breastfeeding women in our county jails, which will promote optimal infant nutrition and women's health, as well as preserve breastfeeding after release.

**Actions you can take:**

1. Join the Breastfeeding Action Network [here](#) to join the Advocacy Call on Monday, July 16th at 9:30 AM.
2. [Read](#) and [Sign on](#) to this [statement](#) from our National Coalition partner, United States Breastfeeding Committee.
3. See and act on the United States Lactation Consultant Associations recommended list of actions [here](#).
4. To support the above legislations, click [here](#) for recommendation actions.

Together, we can all make it easier for families to access human milk and meet their breastfeeding goals. Go [here](#) to learn more about the California Breastfeeding Coalition our partners.

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