

October 16, 2023

Honorable Bernie Sanders  
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Bill Cassidy  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
2188 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Frank Pallone  
2107 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Virginia Foxx  
2462 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Bobby Scott  
2328 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

### **Pasteurized Donor Human Milk Constellation Letter in Support of the Access to Donor Milk Act**

We the undersigned, in solidarity with the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee (USBC)-affiliated Pasteurized Donor Human Milk Constellation, are in full support of the Access to Donor Milk Act (ADMA) of 2023 (S. 2819/H.R. 5486) and request your support in passing this legislation. The ADMA is a critical component of the [USBC vision for a robust infrastructure for infant nutrition security](#) in the United States, which includes four pillars: parents, programs, policies, and a plan for emergencies. The vision for the four pillars was codified by the USBC in response to the 2022 infant formula recall and subsequent shortage, but the country's need for an infrastructure to protect and nourish all of our country's youngest people is ongoing.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive breastfeeding/human milk feeding for the first six months after birth and continued breastfeeding with addition of complementary foods to two years of age.<sup>1</sup> Donor human milk plays a vital role to support exclusive human milk diets when mother's own milk is unavailable or insufficient. Pasteurized donor human milk is human milk that has been donated to a milk bank. It is specifically processed so that it can be given to any baby, although it is generally prioritized for distribution to the most medically vulnerable infants, including those with very low birth weight or with serious gastrointestinal issues. Pasteurized donor human milk can also serve as a bridge to breastfeeding when there is a delay in mother's milk increasing or a medical need for supplementation. When mother's own milk is unavailable or insufficient, donor milk offers similar benefits, such as optimal nutrition, easy digestibility, and immune protection. The World Health

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<sup>1</sup> Policy Statement: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk. American Academy of Pediatrics; 2022.

Organization and the AAP recommend the use of donor milk for low-birthweight infants, as well as for sick infants who cannot be fed their mother's own milk.<sup>2,3</sup>

Access to donor milk has been shown to reduce infant mortality rates, lower healthcare costs, and shorten hospital stays. Specifically, the use of donor milk is associated with increased survival rates and lowered rates of infections, sepsis, serious lung disease, and gastrointestinal complications.<sup>4,5</sup> In 2021, there were 383,979 preterm births in the United States, representing 10.5% of live births,<sup>6</sup> so the potential for health and cost savings is substantial. Data from one study shows that the cost of a neonatal intensive care unit stay for infants at very low birth weight is nearly \$220,000 for 56 days.<sup>7</sup> The use of donor human milk can reduce hospital length of stay by 18-50 days by preventing the development of necrotizing enterocolitis in preterm infants.<sup>8</sup> And the benefits of human milk extend beyond the inpatient stay, with infants receiving all human milk diets in the NICU experiencing fewer hospital readmissions and better overall long-term outcomes.<sup>9,10</sup>

Although donor milk has important health implications for vulnerable infants in all communities and can result in significant economic benefit, donor milk is not accessible equitably across communities.<sup>11</sup> **The ADMA would help increase life-saving access to donor milk for more families by:**

- 1) Allowing state agencies to use Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) funding to promote the need for and benefits of donor milk and allowing WIC funds to support donor milk activities in states, tribes, and territories;
- 2) Providing emergency capacity-building funding (\$3 million) for milk banks in the event that there is a rapid increase in demand for donor milk, as occurred during the 2022 formula shortage;

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<sup>2</sup> Maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health: guidelines on optimal feeding of low birth-weight infants in low- and middle-income countries. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Standards for improving the quality of care for small and sick newborns in health facilities. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Villamor-Martinez, E., Pierro, M., et al. (2018). Donor human milk protects against bronchopulmonary dysplasia: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Nutrients*, 10(2), 238.

<sup>5</sup> Hair, A.B., Peluso, A.M., et al. (2018). Beyond necrotizing enterocolitis prevention: improving outcomes with an exclusive human milk based diet. *Breastfeeding Medicine*, 11(2), 70-74.

<sup>6</sup> March of Dimes. (n.d.). A profile of prematurity of United States.

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/united-states/prematurity-profile>

<sup>7</sup> Phibbs CS, Schmitt SK, Cooper M, Gould JB, Lee HC, Profit J, Lorch SA. Birth Hospitalization Costs and Days of Care for Mothers and Neonates in California, 2009-2011. *Journal of Pediatrics*. 2019 Jan; 204:118-125. e14.

<sup>8</sup> Buckle, A., & Taylor, C. (2017). Cost and Cost-Effectiveness of Donor Human Milk to Prevent Necrotizing Enterocolitis: Systematic Review. *Breastfeeding medicine : the official journal of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine*, 12(9), 528-536. <https://doi.org/10.1089/bfm.2017.0057>.

<sup>9</sup> Vohr, B.R., Poindexter, B. (2006). Beneficial Effects of Breast Milk in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit on the Developmental Outcome of Extremely Low Birth Weight Infants at 18 Months of Age. *Pediatrics*, 118(1), 115-123.

<sup>10</sup> Racial Disparities in Human Donor Milk Feedings: A Study Using Electronic Medical Records. *Health Equity*. Nov 2022.798-808.

<sup>11</sup> Boundy EO, Perrine CG, Nelson JM, Hamner HC. Disparities in Hospital-Reported Breast Milk Use in Neonatal Intensive Care Units - United States, 2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2017 Dec 8;66(48):1313-1317.

- 3) Creating a donor milk awareness program at the Department of Health and Human Services (\$1 million) to educate the public on donor milk, nonprofit milk banks, and to publicize the need for donor milk; and
- 4) Requiring that the Secretary of Health and Human Services draft guidance that addresses appropriate standards for collection, processing, handling, transfer, and storage of donor milk and requiring the Secretary to convene a public meeting to inform this guidance.

Throughout the infant formula recalls and resulting shortages in 2022, milk banks across the country saw a significant increase in inquiries to donate and receive milk. The formula shortages and recalls disproportionately impacted families who were unable to pivot to different formula brands. Milk banks increased their processing rates in response to the increased demand, but more milk banks, depots (drop-off sites), and especially more donors are needed. **The need to invest in an infrastructure that ensures American babies are safely fed has never been clearer.**

The small but impactful investments in the Access to Donor Milk Act provide an extraordinary opportunity for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress to save lives while reducing healthcare costs. We, the signatories, reiterate our full support for federal legislation that expands access to and ensures the continued safety of donor human milk. We call on Congress to quickly pass the Access to Donor Milk Act of 2023 to ensure that medically vulnerable infants across the country have access to life-saving donor milk.

Thank you for your support of babies and families. If you have any questions or would like more information on the ADMA, please contact Lindsay Groff, the Executive Director of the Human Milk Banking Association of North America at [lindsay@hmbana.org](mailto:lindsay@hmbana.org).

#### CO-SIGNERS

*as of 5/28/2024*

*Total number of signers as of 5/28/2024: 237*

#### **International, National, and Tribal Organizations:**

1,000 Days  
 American Academy of Pediatrics  
 American Association of Birth Centers  
 American Breastfeeding Institute  
 American College of Nurse Midwives  
 Association of State Public Health Nutritionists  
 A Better Balance  
 Baby-Friendly USA, Inc.  
 Breastfeeding Family-Friendly Communities  
 Breastfeeding USA  
 Caring Across Generations  
 Center for Health Equity, Education and Research  
 Childbirth and Postpartum Professionals Association  
 Global Military Lactation Community

HealthConnect One  
 Healthy Children Project, Inc.  
 Healthy Horizons  
 Healthy Nourishments  
 Human Milk Banking Association of North America  
 Human Milk Foundation  
 International Breastfeeding Institute  
 International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners  
 Kewa Pueblo Health Corporation  
 Lactation Education Resources  
 Lamaze International  
 La Leche League Alliance  
 La Leche League of the United States of America, Inc.  
 Mamava  
 March for Moms  
 March of Dimes

Médecins Humanistes  
Medela LLC  
Melinated Moms  
Military Birth Resource Network and  
Postpartum Coalition  
Mom Congress  
MomsRising  
Mothering Justice  
MotherJourney  
Mothers' Milk Bank  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse  
Practitioners  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Institute for Children's Health Quality  
National League for Nursing  
National Medical Association  
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium  
National Organization for Women  
National Perinatal Association  
National WIC Association  
Nurse Family Partnership  
Nurture  
Pumpin Pal  
Reclaim Black Motherhood LLC  
Rocky Mountain Children's Health Foundation  
Symonette Strategies & Solutions  
The Center for Emergency Management  
Intelligence Research  
The Institute for the Advancement of  
Breastfeeding and Lactation Education  
The Salvador E. Alvarez Institute for Non-  
Violence  
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee  
U.S. Lactation Consultant Association

**Regional, State, and Local Organizations:**

Alabama

Alabama Breastfeeding Committee  
Baobab Birth Collective

Alaska

Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition

Arizona

Cochise County WIC

California

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific  
Islander Lactation Collaborative of California  
BreastfeedLA  
California Breastfeeding Coalition  
California WIC Association  
Mothers & Babies First  
NEC Society  
Nursing Mothers Counsel Inc.  
Salud Para La Gente  
San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Sonoma County Department of Health Services  
University of California Milk Bank

Colorado

Banner Fort Collins Medical Center  
Boulder County Nurse-Family Partnership  
Birth Into Community  
Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition  
Colorado Children's Campaign  
Cuenta Conmigo Lactancia  
Denver WIC  
Montrose County Region 10 NFP  
Motherhood Untamed Lactation  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Colorado  
Northern Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition  
The Nest Lactation and Postpartum Support  
Uchealth

Connecticut

Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition  
Southern Connecticut State University,  
Department of Public Health

Delaware

Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware

District of Columbia

District of Columbia Breastfeeding Coalition

Florida

Breastfeeding Coalition of Palm Beach County  
Florida Breastfeeding Coalition  
Florida Lactation Consultants Association  
Florida West Coast Breastfeeding Task Force  
Kristen Cairns Lactation  
Tampa Bay Breastfeeding Task Force  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Florida

### Georgia

Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition  
Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of  
Pediatrics  
Med Milk, Inc

### Hawaii

Breastfeeding Hawaii

### Illinois

Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Mothers' Milk Bank of the Western Great Lakes  
Precious Jewels Moms Ministries  
The Busy Birthworker

### Indiana

Flourish, Inc  
Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition  
Indiana University Health  
The Milk Bank

### Iowa

Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition

### Kansas

Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Breastfeeding  
Coalition

### Kentucky

Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition  
Lactation Improvement Network of Kentucky,  
Inc.

### Louisiana

Birthmark Doula Collective  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Louisiana

### Maine

Maine State Breastfeeding Coalition

### Maryland

4th Trimester Family  
Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition  
Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of  
Pediatrics  
Werbie, LLC

### Massachusetts

Beth Israel Lahey Health Winchester Hospital  
Brigham and Women's Hospital  
Cambridge/Somerville WIC Program  
Cape Cod Hospital  
Massachusetts Baby-Friendly Collaborative  
Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition  
Mass. PPD Fund  
Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast  
New England Mothers First  
Perinatal Neonatal Quality Improvement  
Network of Massachusetts

### Michigan

2 for Baby LLC  
Gratiot County Breastfeeding Coalition  
InterCare Community Health Network WIC  
Michigan Breastfeeding Network

### Minnesota

Breastfeeding Boosters of Cottonwood,  
Jackson, and Nobles Counties  
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition  
Minnesota Milk Bank for Babies

### Mississippi

Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition  
Mississippi Chapter of the American Academy  
of Pediatrics  
Mothers' Milk Bank of Mississippi

### Missouri

It Takes a Village - SEMO  
Missouri Breastfeeding Coalition  
St. Louis Breastfeeding Coalition

### Montana

Mothers' Milk Bank of Montana

### Nebraska

Nebraska Breastfeeding Coalition

### Nevada

Shining Star Community Services  
Touch of Gold

### New Hampshire

New Hampshire Breastfeeding Task Force

New Jersey

Capital Health Hospital  
City of East Orange WIC Clinic  
La Leche League of the Garden State  
New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition  
Perinatal Health Equity Initiative

New Mexico

New Mexico Breastfeeding Task Force

New York

Ancient Song  
Breastfeed NY  
Experience Birth & Beyond  
New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition  
NYU Langone Health  
Public Health Solutions  
Supporting Our Mothers Initiative  
The New York Milk Bank  
University of Rochester, Division of  
Breastfeeding and Lactation Medicine

North Carolina

Breastfeed Orange North Carolina  
Momma's Village-Fayetteville, Inc  
North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition  
The Milky Mermaid, LLC

Ohio

Appalachian Breastfeeding Network  
Bright Future Lactation Resource Centre Ltd.  
Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance  
University Hospitals

Oklahoma

Athena Lactation, LLC  
Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates  
Oklahoma Mothers' Milk Bank

Oregon

Black Parent Initiative  
Dandelion Myofunctional and Lactation Therapy

Pennsylvania

Allegheny County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Breast Assured Lactation LLC

Chester County Health Department  
Coalition for Lactation-Friendly Schools  
CONVERGE: Center for Innovative Research on  
Gender Health Equity at the University of  
Pittsburgh

Drexel University  
Main Line Health  
Pennsylvania Breastfeeding Coalition  
Pennsylvania Mid-state Lactation Coalition  
Pennsylvania Resource Organization for  
Lactation Consultants  
Philadelphia Department of Public Health  
Reclaim Black Motherhood  
Sunrise Lactation LLC  
University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing  
Maternal/Perinatal and Reproductive Health  
Research

Puerto Rico

Alimentación Segura Infantil  
Centro Integral de Lactancia  
Centro Pediatrico de Lactancia y Crianza  
Puerto Rico Chapter American Academy  
Pediátrica, Inc

Rhode Island

Urban Perinatal Education Center

South Carolina

Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comprehensive  
Health Services, Inc.

Tennessee

Mothers' Milk Bank Tennessee  
Shelby County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Sumner Regional Medical Center  
Tennessee Lactation Care LLC

Texas

Kelsey-Seybold Clinic  
Milk Connections  
Mothers' Milk Bank at Austin Inc.  
Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas  
Public Health Solutions  
Tarrant County Breastfeeding Coalition  
Texas Children's Hospital  
The Human Milky Way

### Vermont

University of Vermont Medical Center  
Vermont Breastfeeding Network  
Vermont Donor Milk Center, Inc.  
Vermont Lactation Consultant Association

### Virginia

757Breastfeeds  
Blue Ridge Breastfeeding Coalition  
Childrens Hospital of Richmond at VCU  
Erica the Doula  
Love is Patient Lactation Services, LLC  
Nurture  
Old Dominion University School of Nursing  
Postpartum Support Virginia  
The King's Daughters Milk Bank  
Virginia Breastfeeding Advisory Committee  
Virginia Department of Health  
Virginia Breastfeeding Coalition  
Virginia Commonwealth University Health

### Washington

Breastfeeding Coalition of Washington  
Kitsap County Breastfeeding Coalition  
South Sound Lactation Network

### West Virginia

Rhia Ventures  
West Virginia American College of Nurse-  
Midwives Affiliate  
West Virginia Breastfeeding Alliance

### Wisconsin

Breastfeeding Alliance of Northeast Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Association of Lactation Consultants