

CHAPTER 4**(SCR 9)**

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION recognizing the importance of removing barriers to breastfeeding in the Commonwealth.

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, and the World Health Organization recommend that babies be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of an infant's life and continue to be breastfed until 12 months of age or longer as mutually desired; and

WHEREAS, only 31 percent of Kentucky infants are still breastfeeding at six months of age, giving the Commonwealth the ranking 42 out of 50 for breastfeeding rates among all states; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky's rates of breastfeeding initiation, duration, exclusivity and worksite support fall well below both the national baseline and the Healthy People 2020 goal to increase the proportion of infants who are ever breastfed to 82 percent; and

WHEREAS, in January 2011, the United States Surgeon General announced a "Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding" that identifies barriers to optimal breastfeeding in health care practices, employment, communities, research, public health infrastructure, and social networks, and also recommended methods in which families, communities, employers, and health care professionals could help eliminate those barriers to improve breastfeeding rates and increase support for breastfeeding; and

WHEREAS, children fed mainly breastmilk for the first six months of life are 22 percent less likely to be overweight by age fourteen and according to the 2014 Robert Wood Johnson's Trust for America's Health Report, Kentucky ranks number one in the nation for high school students that are obese; and

WHEREAS, research shows that human milk and breastfeeding provide advantages with regard to general health, growth, and development while significantly decreasing the risk of a large number of acute and chronic diseases such as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, asthma, allergies, diabetes, viral and bacterial infections, childhood obesity, childhood leukemia, necrotizing enterocolitis, and infant mortality; and

WHEREAS, mothers who breastfeed have a decreased risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancer, postpartum depression, and osteoporosis later in life; and

WHEREAS, the nutrients exclusive to human milk are vital to the growth, development, and maintenance of the human brain and cannot be manufactured; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service estimates that at least 3.6 billion dollars in medical expenses could be saved each year if the number of children breastfed for at least six months increased to fifty percent; and

WHEREAS, breastfeeding has positive economic impacts on families by decreasing the need to pay for medical care for a sick infant and eliminating the need to purchase infant formula; and

WHEREAS, the health benefits to breastfed children and their mothers results in lower health care costs for employers, less employee time off to care for sick children, and higher productivity and employee loyalty; and

WHEREAS, employers, employees, and society benefit by supporting a mother's decision to breastfeed and by helping to reduce the obstacles to initiating and continuing breastfeeding;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the House of Representatives concurring therein:

➔Section 1. The Senate recognizes the unique health, economic, and societal benefits that breastfeeding provides to babies, mothers, families, and the community as a whole and affirms that the Commonwealth of Kentucky should work to ensure that barriers to initiation and continuation of breastfeeding are removed.

➔Section 2. The Senate encourages employers to strongly support and encourage breastfeeding by striving to provide accommodations of appropriate space and time to allow employees to express their milk.

➔Section 3. The Senate strongly encourages all state agencies that administer programs providing maternal or child health services to provide information about breastfeeding to program participants, and to encourage and support program participants' choices to breastfeed.

➔Section 4. The Clerk of the Senate is hereby directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to Senator Reginald Thomas for distribution.

Signed by Governor March 14, 2016.