

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

HB26

“An act relating to breaks for employees who are nursing mothers”

Sponsor Statement

In 2011, the Surgeon General of the United States issued a statement supporting the benefits of breastfeeding. In addition to the health benefits, including protection from infections and illnesses, reduce risk of SIDS and development of asthma, there are also economic benefits, such as savings on infant formula and better infant health, eliminating the need for nursing mothers to take time off work. HB 26 will require employers to provide reasonable unpaid break time during the day to an employee who is a nursing mother so that employee may breastfeed or express milk.

A study published in Pediatrics estimated that if 90% of U.S. families followed guidelines to breastfeed exclusively for the first six months, the U.S. would annually save \$13 billion (in a study from 2011) from reduced medical and other costs.

The Surgeon General also suggested the best way to ensure new and inexperienced mothers will breastfeed is to provide clean and private places for a nursing mother to express milk.

This bill does not require that children be present in a workplace at times other than break times. In the best interest of families, nursing mothers, health and economy, I ask you to join me in supporting HB 26, an act relating to breaks for employees who are nursing mothers.