



From the Offices of Representative Andrea Valderrama,
Representative Hoa Nguyen, &
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Oregon House Unanimously Passes Protections for Breastfeeding Agricultural Workers

SALEM, Ore. – Today, Oregon House Democrats unanimously passed [HB 2541](#). This bill will extend protections to agricultural workers by guaranteeing them the right to breaks and a private place to express milk. These protections are a necessary and significant step toward equity in the workplace.

This concept was passed unanimously out of the House in 2019 and was signed into the law by Governor Kate Brown, but a loophole in the law meant that farmworkers were unintentionally excluded. This bill would close that loophole and extend protections to breastfeeding farmworkers.

“Extending these protections promotes a healthier work environment, benefiting families, employers, and the agricultural sector,” says **Representative Andrea Valderrama (D – Outer East Portland)**. “This is an issue of equity, justice, and the health of mother and child.”

“The right of a mother to express breast milk for their child is not only a basic workplace protection, it's a basic moral value,” says **State Representative Dacia Grayber (D – SW Portland and E Beaverton)**. “This bill closes a loophole in our law for agriculture workers that are not covered by this protection - and I am committed to bolstering similar protections for parents everywhere.”

Workers with these protections in other sectors were 2.3 times more likely to breastfeed exclusively at six months and 1.5 times more likely to continue each month compared to those without access. Breastfed babies tend to have stronger immune systems, fewer illnesses, and reduced healthcare costs.¹ Additionally, mothers who can express milk at work are less likely to experience complications such as clogged milk ducts or mastitis, conditions that can negatively affect their health.²

"Every worker deserves the basic right to care for their child's well-being without fear of losing their job. This bill corrects an oversight and ensures that farmworkers—who are essential to our economy and putting food on our tables—have the same protections as other workers when it comes to taking breaks and expressing milk. This is a simple step toward fairness, supporting both working parents and the health of their children," says **Rep. Hoa Nguyen (D – East Portland and Damascus)**.

The bill goes next to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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¹ Kozhimannil KB, Jou J, Gjerdingen DK, and McGovern PM. Access to workplace accommodations to support breastfeeding after passage of the Affordable Care Act. *Womens Health Issues*. 2016; 26(1):6-13.

² Massachusetts Breastfeeding Coalition, 2019.

<https://massbreastfeeding.org/breastfeeding-and-the-workplace-a-resource-for-employers/>