

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 13, 2024

The Honorable Michael G. Whitaker
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Whitaker,

We write to bring renewed attention to flight crews' longstanding need to pump breastmilk aboard aircraft during non-critical phases of flight. Flight crews experiencing the joy of having a baby should never be forced to stop pumping breastmilk, especially when a simple, time-tested, and demonstrably safe policy framework exists to avoid this difficult and frustrating situation.

Stakeholders have worked hard to achieve a policy consensus for consideration in legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Specifically, stakeholders and congressional leaders have agreed to direct the FAA Administrator to issue guidance to Part 121 air carriers relating to the expression of milk by crewmembers on an aircraft during non-critical phases of flight, consistent with the performance of the crewmember's duties aboard the aircraft. In developing this guidance, the Administrator must consider multiple methods of expressing breastmilk that could be used by crewmembers.

The PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act of 2022 (PUMP Act), included in the Fiscal Year 2023 omnibus appropriations law, guarantees millions of working parents who want to pump milk during their workday have that right without risking discipline or termination from their employer under federal law. Excluding flight crews does not bode well for the future of our aviation workforce at a time when we need to keep existing airline employees on the rolls and to attract more to join the industry.


For flight crews, safety is always the top priority, and we now have decades of evidence demonstrating that flight crews can attend to this physiological need in a way that does not disrupt safety, service, or other duties. We're glad to see regional offices of the FAA have already reviewed and permitted at least two airlines to enact policies allowing their flight crew to express breastmilk during non-critical phases of the flight and encourage you to continue down this path.

With this new directive receiving an affirmative vote in the Senate Commerce Committee earlier this month, we urge you to act preemptively to prepare this advisory circular and publish under current FAA authority.

Sincerely,

United States Senate

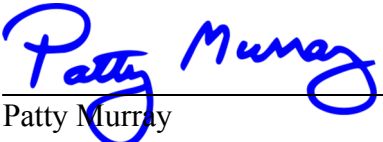
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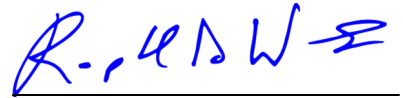
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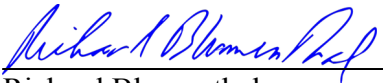
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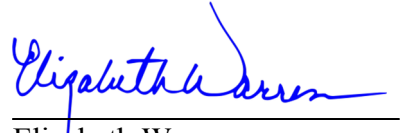
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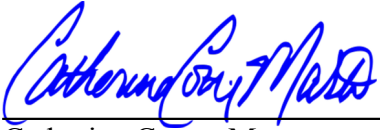
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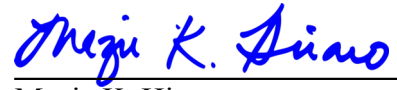
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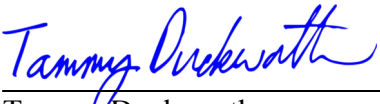
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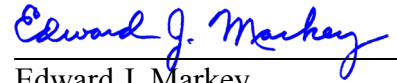
Catherine Cortez Masto
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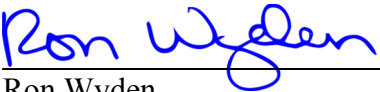
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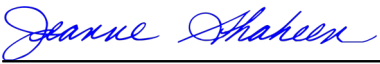
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