



The AIR PUMP Act

Sen. Jeff Merkley - Rep. Val Hoyle

The AIR PUMP Act addresses an urgent need for clear rules and regulations allowing flight crews to safely pump aboard aircraft. Millions of new mothers are now guaranteed the right to pump at work since the PUMP Act of 2022 was included in the Fiscal Year 2023 omnibus appropriations law. Unfortunately, flight crews are not covered by this historic win for working parents—even as thousands are currently taking maternity leave to care for their new babies. The AIR PUMP Act will right this wrong and extend these protections to all workers, including flight crews.

The PUMP Act provides federal labor protection for millions of working mothers who want to pump milk during their workday without fear of being fired by their employer. 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 attract more to join the industry. Forcing new parents to decide between quitting their jobs to stay home to breastfeed their infants, or keeping their jobs but risking getting fired for pumping is not only outrageous and unacceptable, but will also make it more challenging for airlines to recruit and retain employees. We all must join together to correct this unfair loophole. In letters and stories shared across the aviation sector, flight crews are calling out the negative impact this exemption from the PUMP Act has on lives and wellbeing of pumping mothers in the aviation industry.

The AIR PUMP Act:

- Requires air carriers to provide a reasonable break time for flight crews to express breast milk for 1 year after the child's birth, and requires airlines to figure out a way to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public with the following limitations to reflect the unique workplace inside an aircraft.
 - An air carrier is never required to provide a break during critical phases of flight.
 - An air carrier's compliance with the break requirement cannot impact the safety or security of flight or the operation of an aircraft in flight or on the ground;
 - An air carrier cannot be required to incur significant expense, such as through the addition of a crewmember, removal or retrofitting of seats, or the modification or retrofitting of an aircraft (except by adding a curtain or a screen, which is not considered a significant expense).
- The Secretary of Labor will enforce AIR PUMP the same way they enforce the PUMP Act of 2022.

The AIR PUMP Act is supported by the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, the Transport Workers Union, the Association of Professional Flight Attendants, the Teamsters, the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, the Air Line Pilots Association, the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee, the Center for WorkLife Law, the American Civil Liberties Union, and A Better Balance.

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