



***March for Mom's Policy & Advocacy Director, Yuliya Labko, Statement to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission on the Importance of Breastfeeding Support Products***

April 28th, 2023

**U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**  
Bethesda, Maryland

Re: Breastfeeding Support Products

Dear Members of the U.S. Product Safety Commission,

I write on behalf of March for Moms to voice support of breastfeeding support products, such as nursing pillows. The currently available products increase and sustain breastfeeding rates, help parents have choices of feeding supports, and promote equity in breastfeeding. As the proposed mandatory rule is being introduced please consider our call to ensure families continue to have support and options.

March for Moms is a non-partisan, solution-oriented 501c3 nonprofit that advocates for the best possible health and well-being of all mothers. We align the advocacy efforts of families, health care providers, industry, and policy makers to ensure that all families can grow with dignity.

Breastfeeding is one of the most demanding parenting responsibilities. It is also one of the most important and cost-effective health prevention strategies for the mom and infant. It has been associated with decreased risks of diabetes, asthma, obesity, infections, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).<sup>1</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for approximately 6 months after birth.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the AAP supports continued breastfeeding, along with appropriate complementary foods introduced at about 6 months, as long as mutually desired by mother and child for 2 years or beyond.<sup>2</sup>

By some estimates, breastfeeding an infant for one year comes close to the same number of hours as a full time job. The U.S. provides very little institutional and structural support for breastfeeding; there is no national paid parental leave policy nor are there consistent supports in place across the country for feeding spaces and access to supplies. Due to these, and other systemic reasons, the U.S. has one of the lowest breastfeeding initiation rates, ranking 26th among other industrialized countries.<sup>3</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), less than 50% of infants were exclusively breastfed through 3 months and about 25% were exclusively breastfed through 6 months.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, breastfeeding disparities decrease breastfeeding rates in some communities. Fewer

1. [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis\\_data/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/index.htm)
2. <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/150/>
3. <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>

non-Hispanic Black infants (74.1%) are ever breastfed compared with Asian infants (90.8%), non-Hispanic White infants (85.3%) and Hispanic infants (83.0%).<sup>1</sup>

There are commercial supports available to aid families in breastfeeding. These supports provide physical aid to breastfeeding individuals by assisting in positioning and holding infants to make breastfeeding more comfortable and satisfactory. Many parents also use these supports to pump breast milk. Breastfeeding support products are readily available and accessible to most families in commercial and online stores. It has been shown that satisfaction with breastfeeding is directly related to support for breastfeeding. This support can be in the form of public policies such as paid family leave, institutional support like access to Baby Friendly Hospitals, and individual support from lactation consultants, friends, and family. Last but not least, we must make all tools such as nursing pillows and breast pumps available to all. Our country is already struggling to support moms and families, and removing nursing and infant pillows would further jeopardize breastfeeding and the health of babies nationwide.

March for Moms calls on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to recognize the importance of breastfeeding supports and the consequences of removing, significantly changing, and reducing options for breastfeeding families.

Sincerely,

Yuliya Labko, MSN, CNM  
Director of Policy & Advocacy  
March for Moms

1. [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis\\_data/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/index.htm)
2. <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/150/>
3. <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>