



HEALTH CARE

Robert F Flora, MD, MBA, MPH
Chief Academic Officer/ Vice President of Academic Affairs

May 14, 2024

House Judiciary Committee
Anderson House Office Building
124 N Capitol Ave. Room 521,
Lansing, MI 48933

Re: McLaren Health Care Support for SB 351

Dear Chairperson Green, Majority Vice Chairperson Edwards, Minority Vice Chairperson Fink, and members of the Michigan House of Representatives Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of McLaren Health Care, I urge you to support SB 351 which would expand upon Michigan's Breastfeeding Anti-Discrimination Act to include protections for pumping (i.e. expressing human milk) and breastfeeding in public spaces. McLaren Health Care through its multiple hospital subsidiaries and office practices provide care to many pregnant/ postpartum women and newborns/ infants.

Parents who must be away from their infant for prolonged periods of time - for example, while they are going to school, at work, or in public venues - need and deserve additional protection and support to nourish their children. Regular and frequent pumping or feeding also supports the ability to continue to produce adequate milk. Health experts, including the World Health Organization, recommend that parents exclusively breastfeed their infants for 6 months, and then continue breastfeeding through 2 years old or longer. According to MDHHS' 2023 breastfeeding report, we see that nearly 75% of infants have been breastfed, with the duration of breastfeeding notably declining - especially between two and six months of age, with rates dropping from 59% to 30%. Human milk provides better protection than formula due to the passive immunity from maternal antibodies that human milk contains. Barriers must be removed to make human milk easier and more accessible for Michigan families. Protecting public milk expression or breastfeeding can provide additional ways to keeping infants healthier. As such, we urge you to vote yes on SB 351 and support Michigan families by establishing anti-discrimination protections for public pumping and breastfeeding of human milk.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Robert F. Flora MD'.

Robert F Flora, MD, MBA, MPH
Chief Academic Officer/ VP of Academic Affairs
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Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Medicine
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