



News From
The California Women's Law Center

For Immediate Release
September 20, 2007

Contact: Contessa Kellogg Mankiewicz
323-951-9869
310-270-6627

Statement of Katie Buckland, Executive Director of the California Women's Law Center on the Massachusetts Superior Court's refusal to grant a breastfeeding mother extra break time to pump breast milk during the national medical licensing examination:

“It is unfortunate that the Massachusetts Superior Court refuses to acknowledge the realities of working women. The decision not to accommodate and support working mothers who breastfeed is essentially a punishment and, in this case, unfairly puts breastfeeding mothers at a professional disadvantage. In fact, the extreme discomfort caused by the inability to pump may not only impact the outcome of the exam, it may also lead to painful complications including blocked milk ducts or breast inflammation.

“The great irony here is that the medical profession strongly advocates breastfeeding in every other context. In 2002, the American Medical Association urged all states to pass laws that explicitly protect the right of mothers to breastfeed in public, while the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that breastfeeding continue for at least 12 months. Penalizing future doctors who happen to be breastfeeding for taking the recommendations of the medical community is nothing short of hypocrisy.

About the California Women's Law Center

Since its founding in 1989, the California Women's Law Center has worked in collaboration with others to protect, secure and advance the comprehensive civil rights of women and girls. CWLC has unparalleled expertise in strategies to empower individuals to use the law to address the societal and legal issues that perpetuate ongoing gender inequity, women's health issues, reproductive justice and violence against women.

Learn more about the California Women's Law Center at www.cwlc.org