



Legislation Text

File #: 20-522, **Version:** 1

Adopt and present a resolution recognizing August 2020 as National Breastfeeding Month in Solano County (Supervisor Brown)

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Health and Social Services (H&SS) recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt and present a resolution declaring August 2020 as National Breastfeeding Month in Solano County.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The purpose of celebrating National Breastfeeding Month is to bring awareness to the importance of supporting and protecting breastfeeding, particularly during disasters or pandemics. Human milk provides virtually all the protein, sugar and fat a baby needs to be healthy and it contains many substances that support the baby's immune system including antibodies, immune factors, enzymes and white blood cells. These substances protect a baby against viruses, bacterial infections and a variety of diseases not only while breastfeeding, but in some cases, long after they have weaned. Breastmilk provides cognitive, emotional and physiological benefits to babies, providing a foundation for health and well-being.

In addition to providing needed immunological benefits, breastfeeding is important for the mother's mental health, as it helps reduce maternal depression and anxiety. During times of stress, breastfeeding signals the mother's body to produce relaxation hormones. Studies show that breastfeeding helps regulate the body's inflammatory response. Depression is associated with inflammation, and breastfeeding protects both mother and baby mentally and physically.

Financially, there are cost savings associated with breastfeeding. According to the Journal of Pediatrics, researchers have performed cost analyses for various pediatric diseases, such as ear infections, dermatitis, asthma and respiratory tract infections. They found that if 90% of US families breastfed exclusively for at least six months, the U.S. would save \$13 billion per year and prevent 911 deaths, nearly all of which would be in infants. Although this refers to the medical and insurance costs for a community, there are also individual costs of not breastfeeding, such as purchasing formula on limited budgets and increased time off for working parents having to care for sick infants. When there is an economic downturn as a result of unexpected disasters, breastfeeding can be the one thing that ensures a healthy infant and can help to buffer economic challenges for a family. Today, more than ever, breastfeeding support and protection are crucial for the health and safety of future generations. Breastfeeding is also a key component for food security in many underserved populations who are economically disadvantaged.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program provides in-depth personal connection to pregnant and breastfeeding families in WIC. The Peer Counselors are women who have been through the WIC Program and breastfed successfully. They are available to provide mother-to-mother support by phone or at the clinic sites. They talk and troubleshoot with new mothers, many times afterhours and on weekends. Breastfeeding mothers feel more confident and

often surpass their personal breastfeeding goals when they have the timely support they need.

The Breastfeeding Coalition of Solano County provides breastfeeding education to the community and provides a venue for networking and coordination of perinatal services. The Coalition members coordinate with hospitals and clinics to identify families who need assistance and provide resources to sustain successful breastfeeding experiences. The Coalition also helps support legislative policies, such as the lactation accommodation laws for employees and the September 30, 2018 California law (AB2507) effective January 1, 2020 requiring county jails to develop and implement an infant and toddler breast milk feeding policy for lactating inmates.

To commemorate National Breastfeeding Month during this pandemic year, the Breastfeeding Coalition will be sending out weekly social media messages with breastfeeding education and resources. In addition, the Coalition will be hosting its fifth annual Donor Breast Milk Drive later this year on October 15th from 10:30 am - 1:30 pm at 2101 Courage Drive in Fairfield. Donations for the San Jose Mother's Milk Bank will be accepted. Each one quarter ounce of breastmilk helps save premature and medically-fragile infants whose mothers are unable to provide their own breastmilk.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The H&SS staff time associated with the planned National Breastfeeding Month activities and preparing the agenda item are budgeted within the Department's FY2020/21 Preliminary Budget. There is no financial impact to the County General Fund.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to adopt the resolution. This is not recommended, as breastfeeding is a natural, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly way to promote infant and mother health and bonding.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION