

The Connecticut General Assembly



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 9, 2017

Contact: Tess Koenigsmark
860-240-8790

Female Legislators Champion Strengthened Workplace Protections for Pregnant Women

House expected to vote Tuesday on Labor Committee bill

Rep. Liz Linehan (D-Cheshire/Southington/Wallingford), **Rep. Robyn Porter** (D-Hamden/New Haven), **Sen. Mae Flexer** (D-Danielson), and NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut held a press conference today in support of legislation strengthening workplace protections for pregnant women.

[H.B. 6668](#), An Act Concerning Pregnant Women In The Workplace, was introduced by Reps. Conley, Linehan, Luxenberg, McCarthy Vahey, Porter, Simmons and Sen. Flexer. The bill is expected to be brought up in today's House session.

The bill strengthens current protections for pregnant women under the state's anti-discrimination law. Under the legislation, employers would be required to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees, such as being allowed to sit while working or taking more frequent breaks.

It would also prohibit limiting or segregating an employee in a way that would deny her employment opportunities due to her pregnancy and forcing a pregnant employee to accept an accommodation if she does not need one.

"No woman should face discrimination at work because she chooses to start a family, yet in 2017 the way we treat pregnancy continues to be a barrier to women's advancement," **Rep. Linehan** said. "It's not just women who are affected by the loss of wages or missed opportunities – it's their families, the children they support, and our economy. Workplace protections for pregnant women benefit employers by reducing turnover, increasing employee morale and productivity, and reducing workers' compensation costs. A strong economy requires the full workforce participation of women, and we all lose when women are left behind or sidelined in the workplace because of a pregnancy."

“No woman should ever have to choose between pursuing a career and having a family. That is why I stand in staunch support of H.B. 6668, which will strengthen the workplace rights for pregnant women and allow them to have the best of both worlds,” said **Rep. Porter**.

“It’s unfortunate that in 2017 women, who make up nearly 50 percent of the workforce in Connecticut, are still not treated equally in the workplace. We have seen time and again how pregnancy has led to discrimination which has a negative impact on women’s careers, including our pay and opportunities for advancement, and it is imperative that we strengthen protections for women to combat this type of unfair treatment that has serious socioeconomic ramifications,” said **Sen. Mae Flexer** (D-Danielson).

“Improving workplace protections for pregnant women is a pro-choice policy. By passing this legislation, Connecticut legislators will ensure that mothers working to support their family have strong protections if they require accommodations in their jobs while pregnant. This legislation also recognizes the importance of protecting women from being unnecessarily sidelined while pregnant. As women are often the breadwinners for their families, ensuring their economic security and job protection while pregnant is vital for the health and welfare of our state,” said Sarah Croucher, Executive Director of NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut.

18 other states have enacted similar legislation with bipartisan support, including Vermont, which passed legislation Friday strengthening workplace protections for pregnant women.

###