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**Testimony of
The Connecticut Education Association**

Before the Labor Committee

Re: HB 5271 AAC Breastfeeding in the Workplace

February 25, 2020

Good Evening Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, and distinguished members of the Labor Committee. CEA is an organization representing active and retired teachers from over 150 school districts across Connecticut.

We testify today in support of House Bill 5271, and raise additional circumstances for your consideration.

We commend the committee for the work it has done over the years to provide more sensible policies that help women balance their careers with motherhood. We support the enhancements proposed in HB 5271, which would improve privacy and convenience.

However, we believe that the bill could do much more to address the unique circumstances faced by mothers of infants who teach in our schools. Teachers spend the vast majority of their day overseeing children. Teachers cannot take break times at times of their choice. They cannot choose when to take lunch, and lunch periods are usually only 20 minutes long and often spent with students looking for guidance or company. What time Teachers do have that does not require supervision, such as prep periods, are determined based on master scheduling of the student day, which often conflicts with the timeliness for expressing milk.

As a result, a quarter of our teachers surveyed this Fall indicated that finding a suitable place and time to express milk was difficult. This is a remarkable statistic given that the universe answering the question included all teachers, of all ages and genders. In other words, it is likely that this concern is experienced by a vast majority of young mothers who serve as teachers in our schools.

We ask that the committee consider language for addressing the unique circumstances faced by teachers who are also mothers of infants. We offer our assistance to any committee members who wish to address this concern further.

Thank you.