

Reps. Schuitmaker, Smith, Warren, Byrum, Lisa Brown, Liss, Roberts, Byrnes, Bauer, Ball, Terry Brown, Constan, Dean, DeShazor, Durhal, Espinoza, Geiss, Gonzales, Green, Haines, Hansen, Knollenberg, Kurtz, Lori, Marleau, Mayes, Opsommer, Proos, Rogers, Bettie Scott, Segal, Sheltrown, Spade, Valentine, Booher and Meekhof offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 173.

A resolution to urge the Governor and Surgeon General of Michigan and the Michigan Department of Community Health to raise awareness about the benefits of breastfeeding.

Whereas, The breastfeeding of a child is an important and basic act of nurture which provides many well-recognized benefits to mother and child. Breastfeeding is the optimal form of infant nutrition. Breastfeeding protects babies against many diseases such as ear infections, gastroenteritis, and severe lower respiratory infections. According to the United States Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality breastfeeding is associated with lower rates of sudden infant death syndrome, childhood obesity, type 2 diabetes, and leukemia. The maternal health benefits of breastfeeding include reduced risk for type 2 diabetes, as well as breast and ovarian cancers. Breastfeeding results in lower health care costs, including fewer sick care visits, prescriptions and hospitalizations; and

Whereas, Recognizing these benefits, many important national health professional organizations promote breastfeeding. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Obstetricians, and the American Public Health Association, among others, officially recommend that most infants breastfeed for at least 12 months. The federal Healthy People 2010 Initiative has adopted goals that include 75 percent of new mothers initiating breastfeeding and at least 50 percent continuing to breastfeed at six months duration; and

Whereas, The lack of breastfeeding is a public health issue in Michigan. According to the 2001 Ross Mothers Survey, 64.3 percent of Michigan mothers initiated breastfeeding their infants as compared to 69.5 percent of mothers nationwide. There has been a positive trend for breastfeeding rates in Michigan since 1991 when only about 49 percent of women breastfed their infants. However, the state still falls short of meeting the Healthy People 2010 goals; and

Whereas, Supportive programs can increase breastfeeding rates. The Michigan Breastfeeding Initiative (BFI) Mother-to-Mother Program, a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Community Health Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program and Michigan State University Extension Children, Youth, Family, and Communities Program, promotes breastfeeding among low-income women. While visiting mothers in their homes, peer counselors provide breastfeeding information, encouragement, and support. During the 2006 to 2007 fiscal year, 2,632 pregnant or breastfeeding women completed the BFI Mother-to-Mother Program. Of the women enrolled in the program, 96 percent initiated breastfeeding compared to 51 percent of women in the overall Michigan WIC population; and

Whereas, Supportive environments can help new mothers feel secure about breastfeeding in public. Many mothers cite issues related to breastfeeding in public and at work as factors contributing to their decision to quit breastfeeding. Although worksite support for breastfeeding has improved, much more can be done to ensure that employers understand how and why support for their breastfeeding employees is important, and feasible. When a mother chooses to breastfeed, we have a responsibility to protect and support her decision by providing an environment that enables her to be successful; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the Governor and Surgeon General of Michigan and the Michigan Department of Community Health to raise awareness about the benefits of breastfeeding; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor and Surgeon General of Michigan and the Director of the Michigan Department of Community Health.