

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

PROCLAMATION NO. _____

Proclaiming August 2013 National Breastfeeding Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. National Breastfeeding Awareness Month is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services campaign to empower women to commit to breastfeeding by highlighting new research that demonstrates the positive impacts of this practice for both babies and mothers.
- b. Breastfeeding is one of the most beneficial steps a mother can take to protect the lifelong health of her baby and herself. The nutrients, hormones and antibodies in breastmilk protect babies from lower respiratory infections, allergies, asthma, type 2 diabetes and childhood obesity. Mothers who breastfeed have a lower risk of type 2 diabetes, breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and osteoporosis. Breastfeeding is also linked with lower risk of postpartum depression in new mothers.
- c. Breastfeeding promotes healthy attachment between mothers and their babies. Because physical contact is important to newborns, breastfeeding aids in their sense of security, warmth and comfort. Mothers also benefit from this closeness; the skin-to-skin contact can boost the mother's oxytocin, a hormone that helps milk flow and calms the mother.
- d. Breastfeeding saves families money. Formula and feeding supplies can cost well over \$1,500 each year, and formula-fed babies are more commonly subject to ear infections and diarrhea. Breastfed babies are sick less often; and need fewer sick care visits, prescriptions, and hospitalizations. Additionally, breastfeeding mothers miss fewer days from work because their infants are sick less often.
- e. Breastfeeding is a cost-effective way to improve individual and community health. Recent research shows that if 90 percent of families breastfed exclusively for six months, nearly 1,000 deaths among infants could be prevented. The United States would also save \$13 billion per year because medical care costs are lower for fully breastfed infants than never-breastfed infants.

- f. Oregon exceeds the national average for breastfeeding rates on all indicators. With almost half of all pregnant women in Multnomah County receiving benefits from the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, the Multnomah County Health Department has contributed significantly to these increased rates of breastfeeding.
- g. Multnomah County's WIC, Early Childhood Services and the Healthy Birth Initiative collaborate with several community partners including the Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon, The Milk Bank, International Center for Traditional Childbearing (ICTC), Urban League, Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest (NARA), African American Breastfeeding Coalition, Oregon Latino Health Coalition and La Leche League.
- h. Through doulas, community health workers and hospitals that are baby-friendly, the extensive breastfeeding network provides support and resources for mothers throughout Multnomah County. Complimenting these services are the fathers, partners, grandparents, extended families, friends and wise ones that provide every day support for breastfeeding mothers.
- i. Multnomah County supports changes throughout the community – where we live, work, learn, play and worship – that support breastfeeding and the effort to give babies the healthiest start possible.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

August 2013 National Breastfeeding Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

ADOPTED this 15th day of August, 2013.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

Jeff Cogen, Chair

SUBMITTED BY: Commissioner Loretta Smith, District 2