

Proclamation

Whereas, the first week of August is recognized as World Breastfeeding Week – a global initiative to increase awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding and its important and positive long-term effects on the growth and development of infants; and

Whereas, the New York State Department of Health, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Surgeon General encourage breastfeeding during the first six months of infancy as it is the best way an infant can obtain the nutritional and emotional resources needed during the first year of life; and

Whereas, breastfeeding promotes overall health, growth and development, and helps to prevent infections during infancy, as well as asthma, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses in childhood and later adulthood; and

Whereas, mothers benefit from breastfeeding in many ways, as it not only advances postpartum recovery, but decreases the risk of ovarian, uterine and endometrial cancers, as well as anemia, diabetes and osteoporosis; and

Whereas, women with infants and children are one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. labor force, yet women cite returning to work as one of the primary reasons for *not* continuing to breastfeed to six months of age; and

Whereas, accommodations for breastfeeding at work benefit not only women and children, but employers as well—there are cost savings in terms of health care (less illness among breastfed children), higher morale and a stronger sense of loyalty among women employees, and greater awareness of a positive, family-friendly image in the community; and

Whereas, the State of New York, through the enactment of the *Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act*, provides the right of nursing mothers to express milk at work; and

Whereas, New York State recognizes that it is vital to make informed choices about the health and care of infants and supports this weeklong observance which encourages the breastfeeding which benefits mothers as well as infants, who gain valuable nutrition that advances healthy growth and development;

Now, Therefore, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of New York State, do hereby proclaim August 1-7, 2008 as

BREASTFEEDING WEEK

in the Empire State.