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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

JOINT ECONOMIC

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 25, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Committee on Rules & Administration
United States Senate
305 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Ranking Member
Committee on Rules & Administration
United States Senate
305 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Schumer:

I write to request that the Committee on Rules & Administration take steps to address the shortage of family-friendly restrooms and lactation stations for staff and visitors to the United States Senate.

I am deeply concerned by a recent report from NBC Washington that the U.S. Capitol does not meet the federal government's own standards for accommodations for new mothers and parents of small children. The report found that the Capitol complex, including the Capitol building and the House and Senate office buildings, has an inadequate number of lactation stations for mothers given the number of women who work for Congress. Standards from the General Services Administration for other federal buildings require six lactation stations per 1,000 women, which would indicate the need for a total of 42 lactation stations throughout the Capitol complex just to meet the needs of Members and staff.

Furthermore, the report found that the Capitol complex does not have nearly enough restrooms with baby changing stations. Parents of young children in diapers should not have to worry about finding a clean, dedicated space to attend to their children's diapering needs. Changing stations, whether in family or regular restrooms, should be accessible to both mothers and fathers.

Millions of people visit the Capitol complex each year, to meet with their legislators and learn about the history of our Nation's democratic government. Thousands of women work here every day, and nursing mothers who return to work after their children's birth face limited space available for pumping. Nursing mothers who visit the Capitol complex – with or without their infants – have an even harder time finding a clean and private location to nurse or pump.

Regardless of the legal obligation, all staff and visitors to the Capitol complex should be treated with dignity and provided with the appropriate facilities for their personal nursing and hygiene needs. I respectfully urge you to take steps to improve the facilities available for parents working in or visiting the Senate, and to increase awareness of the facilities available to visitors.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator