

TRANSCRIPT OF MEDIA- New law should ease holiday travel for breastfeeding mothers

Becky Miller-lactation counselor for OSF HealthCare

Legislation to make air travel easier for breastfeeding moms is long overdue.

"We can make sure of the safe handling of breast milk and their pumping supplies are happening. We can make sure they can get through safely, quickly and parents don't have to worry about the stress of traveling and can get to where they want to go to safely." (:22)

Miller says legislative hearings on the legislation featured stories from breastfeeding moms.

"They've had to be pulled aside from other people. They put test strips down in their milk and wonder, 'Has my milk just been contaminated?' Is it still safe?' Even formula-fed babies – they do that to the water to make sure there's nothing in it." She adds, "So, these things and getting better policies for safe handling is the best part of this legislation." (:27)

Avoiding stressful travel is also so important for postpartum moms who often have mental health struggles.

"They probably have a crying baby in their arm, a 2-year-old maybe next to them who's not holding still – those are awful experiences for a mom who probably doesn't ever want to travel again. So hopefully this new legislation will help parents and families be able to go make memories as a family and not have to worry about those stresses that they had before." (:22)

Miller suggests that while the legislation is designed to protect and support breastfeeding mothers, there might still be some growing pains as it rolls out nationwide.

"With this being a new legislation, we do worry that not all airports have probably had all of their TSA members gone through education. There still may be some little difficulties or little hiccups here or there but I do hope every family that is traveling this holiday season is able to have a successful and happy trip." (:23)