

Iowa Pregnant Workers' Rights: A straightforward approach for Iowa businesses



Panelists:

Marti Anderson, Iowa State Representative

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Moderators:

Lynn Schreder & Kendra Erkamaa (NAWBO Iowa)

Stories of Pregnant Iowan Workers



- Jessica: Leasing consultant
- Amber & Katie: Jail detention officers
- Madison: Airline contract worker
- Ingrid: Restaurant server

Iowa Statewide Numbers



- Women in Iowa are nearly 30% more likely to be in labor force than women nationally
 - Iowa women's labor force participation rates were 2nd to North Dakota, when compared nationally (2014)
 - Iowa *mothers* are more likely to be in labor force in Iowa than the national average

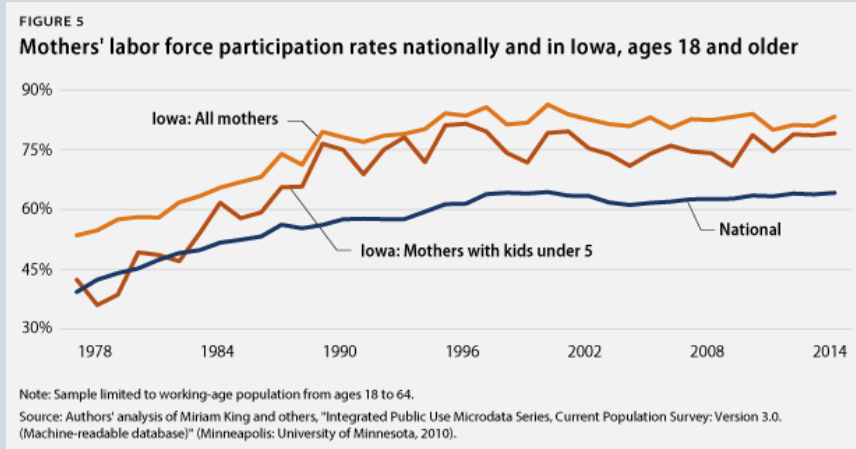


Photo:

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2015/11/05/124819/women-and-families-economic-security-in-iowa/>

Iowa Statewide Numbers



- Mothers = key for economic security in Iowa
- In 71.7% of Iowa families with children under 18, mothers' earnings make up a large portion of family income
 - In 46.6% of families, mothers are sole/primary breadwinner (nationally: 40.9%);
 - In another 25.1% they are co-breadwinners (nationally: 23.1%) bringing in 25% of family income

Iowa Statewide Numbers



- **Parents in the workforce:**
 - Iowa has one of the highest shares of young children with all parents in the workforce (74% of Iowa children; compared to 63% nationally)
- **Single parents:**
 - 1970: Number of Iowa families with a single parent, female head of household: 52,025
 - 2014: 110,374 (112.2% increase)
- **Majority of Iowa workforce:**
 - Millennial generation
 - ~ Age 35 and under

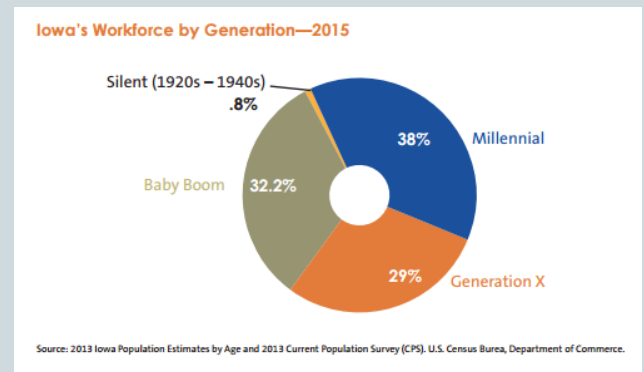
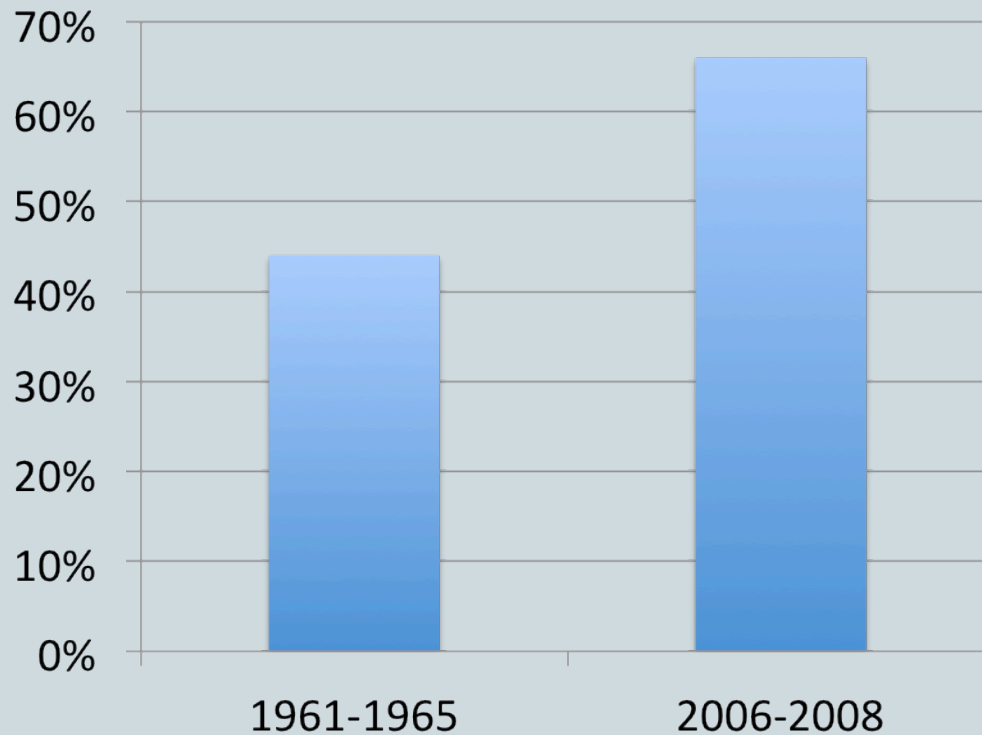


Photo: <http://centraliowaworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-Iowa-Skills2Compete-NSC.pdf>

Pregnant Women Are in the Workforce



The percentage of mothers who work during pregnancy has steadily increased



Iowa Pregnant Workers' Rights Act



Retention of Valuable Workforce

Pregnant workers often only need simple modifications

Certainty & consistency

Employers need clarification about this confusing area of law.

Undue hardship exemption

Exception for significant difficulty or expense.

No excessive costs

Accommodations are low cost and only temporary.

Other States?



- 18 states (including Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota and Nebraska)
- District of Columbia and four major cities.

Commonsense Approach, Needs Clarity



- Many Iowa businesses already provide reasonable accommodations, as was the Iowa Civil Rights Commission's interpretation of state law since 2013
- Iowa Supreme Court: *McQuiston v. City of Clinton (2015)*
- The Iowa Pregnant Workers Rights Act would restore the Commission's Rule
- All Iowa families and businesses would benefit

Define “Reasonable Accommodation”



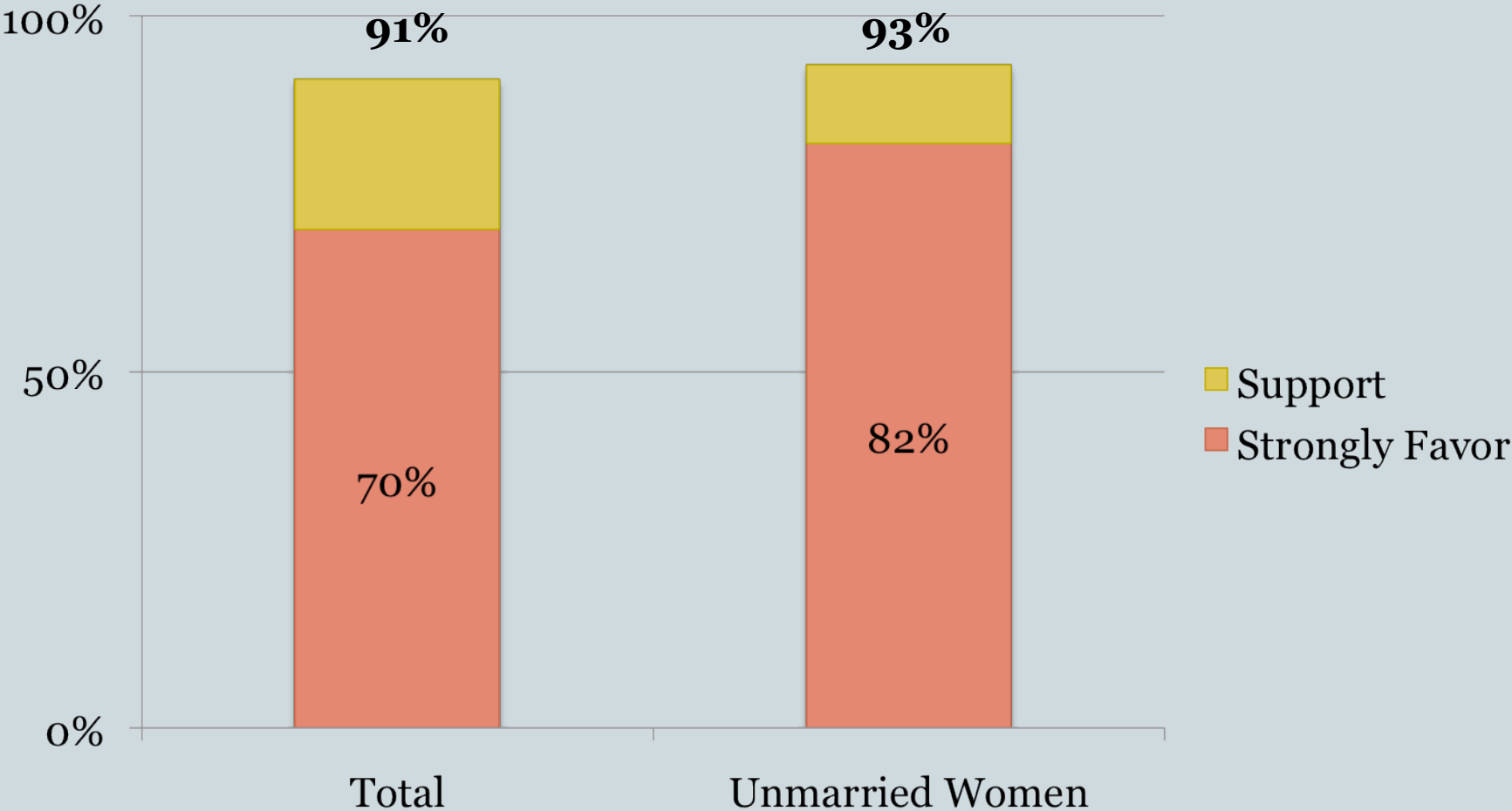
- A typically slight modification that allows an employee to continue working during pregnancy.
- Would not impose an undue hardship on the business (already use this to accommodate employees with disabilities).
- Examples:
 - Allow worker to carry a water bottle.
 - Provide a stool for workers who stand for long periods.
 - Temporarily reassign a pregnant worker to light duty.
 - Allow for extra bathroom breaks.
 - Accommodate necessary doctor appointments.

Fairness is Good for the Bottom Line



- Women control 73% of household spending—treating them fairly at work is supporting consumers.
- Fairness is good for employee retention, increasing morale & productivity, and reduced training costs.
- Accommodating workers is low/no-cost & leads to:
 - better attendance & retention
 - improved workplace safety, &
 - more diversity within the workplace

Americans Overwhelmingly Favor Protections for Pregnant Workers



Source: A Better Balance

Non-Discrimination is Good for Business



“Businesses that fail to provide a workplace free from discrimination are handicapping themselves and will eventually fall behind in the emerging global economy.

Conversely, those that **invest in and empower women** will be advantaged since they will be positioned to attract and retain qualified employees, increase productivity and reduce costly turnover.”

--Cynthia DiBartolo, Chairperson, Greater NY Chamber of Commerce
Business leader in support of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act



- Iowa families should not have to choose between earning a livelihood and a healthy pregnancy.
- Iowa employers deserve a clear, common sense rule that is easy to follow.

for the latest information:

www.pregnantiowaworkers.com

join the coalition & take action:

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Questions & Contact Information



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Thank You!