



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Amendments to the Equal Opportunities Act 2006 Published

Minister for Equality, Samantha Sacramento MP, has today published a Bill that makes specific amendments to the Equal Opportunities Act 2006 to support and protect mothers who breastfeed their children in a public place without discrimination.

The measure was announced in June and is supportive of the initiative that has been proposed by the Gibraltar Breastfeeding Association. The publication of the Bill coincides with the awareness initiative “the Big Latch On” organised by the Gibraltar Breastfeeding Association which is due to take place at 10.30am this Saturday.

Minister Sacramento said ‘I am absolutely delighted to have introduced this legislative amendment to benefit women who wish to breastfeed. Breastfeeding is of course absolutely natural, the health benefits are widely known and accepted. Even though the benefits of breastfeeding are generally accepted, negative attitudes to breastfeeding in public can pose a barrier making women feel uncomfortable and unsafe to do so. As part to its initiative to encourage more women to breastfeed on demand, I feel that it is important to create an accepting environment in public. The introduction of this legislation is a proactive and necessary approach to ensure that women can breastfeed in a café or restaurant without the embarrassment of the owner of the establishment asking them to stop. Businesses would be wise to exercise caution against falling foul of the law, treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding constitutes discrimination.

I support the excellent awareness initiative by the Gibraltar Breastfeeding Association and the promotional work that they do, and particularly their new initiative for local establishments to sign up to the “Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme” where they are advising and encouraging establishments to accommodate breastfeeding women in a welcoming environment. Of course I must also commend and thank the GHA professionals who advise clinically and support mothers.’

The Association stated ‘The Gibraltar Breastfeeding Association are absolutely delighted that Minister Sacramento has introduced legislation to protect the rights of the mother and her child to breastfeed wherever it is necessary to do so. It is a momentous occasion for women in Gibraltar. We hope that the legislation will encourage more mothers to feel secure to continue breastfeeding, which in turn will help other mums to overcome breastfeeding challenges themselves. We thank the minister for her continued support and announcing this on world breastfeeding week on the lead up to our own yearly awareness event “the Big Latch On” to be held this Saturday.’

Ministry of Housing and Equality

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