

## **Jury Duty testimony**

Please vote yes on HB1440 to support families with young children!

My name is Julianne Ohanian and I live in Charles Village in Baltimore City. I have worked as a City Schools teacher for the last 8 years, but began an extended child care when my daughter was born a little less than two years ago.

When my daughter was an infant, I was called to jury duty service. She needed to nurse every few hours, and I was home full time with her. When I tried to ask for a recusal on these grounds, I had to acquire a doctor's note and it took weeks of back and forth with the court to be considered exempt from service.

I was told I could pump in the accommodations at the courthouse, but the court doesn't consider that many breastfeeding infants won't take a bottle if that's not what they're used to, that many breastfeeding mothers don't have a stock of pumped milk on hand, that it takes a long time to develop an additional pumped supply for one or more full days, that many breastfeeding mothers don't have the ice packs and expensive equipment to pump and keep pumped milk safe during an 8 hour period if they don't typically do this.

Furthermore, since I stay home with my daughter during the day and we are without family in the area, my partner would have had to miss work for one or more days while I serve on the jury. He would not be excused from work on these days, and they'd have to be taken as unpaid sick days.

I've been called again recently to serve and, though I am no longer nursing our almost 2 year old, I still care for her full time. My partner is forced to be in the same situation as last time, taking unpaid days off work so that I can fulfill jury service.

These policies are unreasonably strict for parents with young children, where parents may be the full time caregivers without support for childcare, to say nothing of infants who need to breastfeed every few hours. They put an undue burden on families who are already stretched thin as it is.

Please reconsider the policies for parents of young children, especially those with children under 4 or 5, or who are their child's full-time caregiver prior to Kindergarten. Please support HB1440!