



April 13, 2023

Senator Rubio
Assembly Member Quirk-Silva
Senators Blakespear, Laird, McGuire, Skinner, Stern, and Wiener
Assembly Members McKinnor, Pellerin, Luz Rivas, and Schiavo

Senators and Assembly Members:

The Institute of Reproductive Grief Care is writing to express our resounding support for SB 848 "Employment: leave for loss related to reproduction or adoption," which makes it an unlawful employment practice for an employer to refuse to grant a request by an eligible employee to take up to 5 days of reproductive loss leave upon a specified event, including a miscarriage, unsuccessful assisted reproduction, or failed adoption.

At the Institute of Reproductive Grief Care, we help those who experience reproductive loss, including miscarriage, stillbirth, infertility, early infant death, and any other kind of reproductive losses. We provide healing resources for families to help process these losses, and work directly with Emergency Departments and other healthcare professionals to provide education on the often devastating emotional impact that these kinds of losses can have. We have also embraced the "Forget Me Not" flower as a symbol of reproductive loss, to support those touched by reproductive loss, and to assure them that their losses will not be forgotten.

One in four U.S. pregnancies end in miscarriage – and this is just one kind of pregnancy and reproductive loss. Busy California hospital Emergency Departments are reporting an average of 5 pregnancy losses each day! 2.4 million fetal and neonatal deaths occur in the perinatal period globally – 4 times more than the annual number of deaths from cancer. These numbers don't include infertility, which carries its own repeated, emotional pain.

Grief after pregnancy loss and reproductive loss is underestimated – even ignored – in our culture. Yet studies indicate that up to 60% of bereaved parents experience depression, anxiety and PTSD. We hear stories daily of people recovering from a devastating reproductive loss, but feeling pressured to return to work – sometimes within hours of the loss – because of fear or confusion over employer bereavement policies and how they apply to them.

This legislation is critical to assuring that families affected by reproductive loss have the time to grieve and process their emotions, without the added stress and distress of returning to work too soon.

As everyone knows someone who has been impacted by reproductive loss, this legislation can make a significant difference in the lives of all Californians. It can also raise awareness of this important issue, which is pervasive, marginalized and underestimated in our culture.

We urge you to prioritize this legislation and also urge all Senate and Assembly Members to vote in favor of its passage. By supporting this legislation, you will help to ensure a healthier future for Californians and raise awareness of this important, life-changing experience in the workplace and in our State.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michaelene". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the left.

Michaelene Fredenburg
President and CEO
Institute of Reproductive Grief Care
ReproductiveGrief.org