

**Senate File 252 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 252  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 58)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to students who are pregnant or who recently  
2 gave birth who attend state institutions of higher education  
3 governed by the board of regents and community colleges.  
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 261J.1 Student parents at  
2 institutions.

3 1. For the purposes of this section:

4 a. "Institution" means an institution of higher education  
5 governed by the state board of regents or a community college  
6 established under chapter 260C. "Institution" also includes  
7 the faculty, staff, and other employees of such institution of  
8 higher education or community college established under chapter  
9 260C.

10 b. "Reasonable accommodations" includes but is not limited  
11 to all of the following:

12 (1) Taking additional health and safety measures.

13 (2) Allowing a student to reschedule tests and assignment  
14 due dates that are missed for reasons related to the student's  
15 pregnancy.

16 (3) Allowing a student to take a leave of absence.

17 (4) Excusing absences for reasons deemed medically  
18 necessary due to the pregnancy.

19 2. An institution shall not require a student enrolled  
20 in a course of study or research activity to take a leave  
21 of absence, withdraw from a program, or limit the student's  
22 participation in academic activities solely due to pregnancy.  
23 An institution shall make reasonable accommodations to a  
24 pregnant student to allow the student to complete a course of  
25 study or research.

26 3. a. An institution shall allow a student who is pregnant  
27 or has recently given birth an additional amount of time to  
28 take examinations up to the longer of a period consistent with  
29 the policies of the institution or twelve months from the  
30 originally scheduled examination date, unless a longer period  
31 is medically necessary.

32 b. An institution shall allow a student who is pregnant  
33 or has recently given birth an additional amount of time to  
34 complete a degree or candidacy for a degree up to the longer  
35 of a period consistent with the policies of the institution

1 or twelve months from the date originally scheduled for  
2 completion, unless a longer period is medically necessary.

3 4. An institution shall allow a student who is pregnant  
4 or has recently given birth a period of up to twelve months to  
5 take a leave of absence unless there is a medically necessary  
6 reason for a longer leave of absence. Following the leave  
7 of absence, the student shall be allowed to return to the  
8 student's program with the same standing as the student left to  
9 the degree reasonably possible.

10 5. a. The attorney general shall maintain a system to  
11 receive and investigate complaints from students alleging a  
12 violation of this section.

13 b. The attorney general shall forward complaints it  
14 has determined as founded to the United States department  
15 of education's office for civil rights to allow for an  
16 investigation into the institution's compliance with the  
17 federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C.  
18 §1681 et seq.

19 6. An institution shall do all of the following:

20 a. Maintain a written policy for students on pregnancy  
21 discrimination and procedures for addressing pregnancy  
22 discrimination complaints under this section and the federal  
23 Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et  
24 seq. The institution shall provide a copy of the policy to  
25 institution faculty, staff, and employees in required training.  
26 The institution shall provide a copy of the policy to all  
27 students attending orientation at the institution.

28 b. Prominently post notice of the protections afforded to  
29 pregnant students and students who have recently given birth  
30 under the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20  
31 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., on the institution's internet site.

32 c. Provide information concerning the protections afforded  
33 to pregnant students and students who have recently given birth  
34 under the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20  
35 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., through the institution's medical center

1 and student health center to a student upon the student's  
2 request and when otherwise appropriate.

3 d. Assign responsibility for pregnancy and parenting support  
4 and protection to a staff member of the institution. The  
5 institution shall post the responsible staff member's name,  
6 title, and contact information on the institution's internet  
7 site. Responsibilities assigned to a staff member pursuant to  
8 this paragraph shall include but not be limited to:

9 (1) Maintaining current knowledge of the provisions of this  
10 section.

11 (2) Overseeing institution compliance with this section.

12 (3) Understanding and publicizing topics related to  
13 pregnancy and parenting, including but not limited to child  
14 care availability, breastfeeding accommodations, and pregnancy  
15 and parenting assistance from public and private providers, in  
16 order to enhance campus life and academic performance.

17

EXPLANATION

18 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
19 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

20 This bill relates to students who are pregnant or who  
21 recently gave birth who attend state institutions of higher  
22 education governed by the board of regents.

23 The bill defines the term "institution" as an institution of  
24 higher education governed by the state board of regents or a  
25 community college. "Institution" also includes the faculty,  
26 staff, and other employees of such institution of higher  
27 education or community college.

28 The bill defines "reasonable accommodations" as including  
29 but not being limited to taking additional health and safety  
30 measures; allowing a student to reschedule tests and assignment  
31 due dates that are missed for reasons related to the student's  
32 pregnancy; allowing a student to take a leave of absence; and  
33 excusing absences for reasons deemed medically necessary due  
34 to the pregnancy.

35 The bill prohibits an institution from requiring a student

1 enrolled in a course of study or research activity to take  
2 a leave of absence, withdraw from a program, or limit the  
3 student's participation in academic activities solely due to  
4 pregnancy.

5 The bill requires an institution to make reasonable  
6 accommodations to a pregnant student to allow the student to  
7 complete a course of study or research.

8 The bill requires an institution to allow a student who is  
9 pregnant or has recently given birth an additional amount of  
10 time to take examinations, complete a degree, or complete a  
11 candidacy for a degree up to the longer of a period consistent  
12 with the policies of the institution or 12 months from the date  
13 originally scheduled for examination or completion, unless a  
14 longer period is medically necessary.

15 The bill requires an institution to allow a student who  
16 is pregnant or has recently given birth a period of up to 12  
17 months to take a leave of absence unless there is a medically  
18 necessary reason for a longer leave of absence. Following the  
19 leave of absence, the student shall be allowed to return to  
20 the student's program with the same standing and manner as the  
21 student left to the degree reasonably possible.

22 The bill requires the state attorney general to maintain  
23 a system to receive and investigate complaints from students  
24 alleging a violation relating to pregnancy and recent birth  
25 accommodations.

26 The bill requires the attorney general to forward complaints  
27 it has determined as founded to the United States department  
28 of education's office for civil rights to allow for an  
29 investigation into the institution's compliance with the  
30 federal Higher Education Act of 1965.

31 The bill requires an institution to maintain a written  
32 policy for students on pregnancy discrimination and procedures  
33 for addressing pregnancy discrimination complaints under this  
34 Code section and the federal Higher Education Act of 1965. The  
35 institution must provide a copy of the policy to institution

1 faculty, staff, and employees in required training and to all  
2 students attending orientation at the institution.

3 The bill requires an institution to prominently post  
4 notice of the protections afforded to pregnant students and  
5 students who have recently given birth under the federal Higher  
6 Education Act of 1965 on the institution's internet site.

7 The bill requires an institution to provide information  
8 concerning the protections afforded to pregnant students and  
9 students who have recently given birth under the federal  
10 Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et  
11 seq., through the institution's medical center and student  
12 health center to a student upon the student's request and when  
13 otherwise appropriate.

14 The bill requires an institution to assign responsibility  
15 for pregnancy and parenting support and protection to a staff  
16 member of the institution. The institution must post the  
17 responsible person's name, title, and contact information  
18 on the institution's internet site. The responsibilities  
19 assigned to the staff member include but are not limited to  
20 maintaining current knowledge of Code provisions relating to  
21 accommodations afforded to pregnant students and students  
22 who recently gave birth; overseeing institution compliance  
23 with Code provisions relating to accommodations afforded to  
24 pregnant students and students who recently gave birth; and  
25 understanding and publicizing topics related to pregnancy  
26 and parenting, including but not limited to child care  
27 availability, breastfeeding accommodations, and pregnancy and  
28 parenting assistance from public and private providers, in  
29 order to enhance campus life and academic performance.