

**Senate File 288 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 288  
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 12)

**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:

unofficial

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **261K.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 the  
7 faculty, staff, and other employees of such institution of higher  
8 education or community college established under chapter 260C.

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

11 (1) Taking additional health and safety measures.

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

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

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

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

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

30 b. An institution shall allow a student who is pregnant or  
31 has recently given birth an additional amount of time to complete  
32 a degree or candidacy for a degree up to the longer of a period  
33 consistent with the policies of the institution or twelve months  
34 from the date originally scheduled for completion, unless a  
35 longer period is medically necessary.

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

8 5. a. The Iowa office of civil rights shall maintain a  
9 system to receive and investigate complaints from students  
10 alleging a violation of this section.

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

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

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

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

29 c. Provide information concerning the protections afforded  
30 to pregnant students and students who have recently given birth  
31 under the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20  
32 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., through the institution's medical center  
33 and student health center to a student upon the student's request  
34 and when otherwise appropriate.

35 d. Assign responsibility for pregnancy and parenting support

1 and protection to an office of the institution. The institution  
2 shall post the name, location, and contact information of  
3 the responsible office on the institution's internet site.  
4 Responsibilities assigned to the office pursuant to this  
5 paragraph shall include but not be limited to:

6 (1) Maintaining current knowledge of the provisions of this  
7 section.

8 (2) Overseeing institution compliance with this section.

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

14 EXPLANATION

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

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

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

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

32 The bill prohibits an institution from requiring a student  
33 enrolled in a course of study or research activity to take a  
34 leave of absence, withdraw from a program, or limit the student's  
35 participation in academic activities solely due to pregnancy.

1 The bill requires an institution to make reasonable  
2 accommodations to a pregnant student to allow the student to  
3 complete a course of study or research.

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

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

18 The bill requires the Iowa office of civil rights to maintain  
19 a system to receive and investigate complaints from students  
20 alleging a violation relating to pregnancy and recent birth  
21 accommodations.

22 The bill requires the Iowa office of civil rights to forward  
23 complaints it has determined as founded to the United States  
24 department of education's office for civil rights to allow for an  
25 investigation into the institution's compliance with the federal  
26 Higher Education Act of 1965.

27 The bill requires an institution to maintain a written policy  
28 for students on pregnancy discrimination and procedures for  
29 addressing pregnancy discrimination complaints. The institution  
30 must provide a copy of the policy to institution faculty, staff,  
31 and employees in required training and to all students attending  
32 orientation at the institution.

33 The bill requires an institution to prominently post notice  
34 of the protections afforded to pregnant students and students who  
35 have recently given birth under the federal Higher Education Act

1 of 1965 on the institution's internet site.

2 The bill requires an institution to provide information  
3 concerning the protections afforded to pregnant students and  
4 students who have recently given birth under the federal Higher  
5 Education Act of 1965 through the institution's medical center  
6 and student health center to a student upon the student's request  
7 and when otherwise appropriate.

8 The bill requires an institution to assign responsibility  
9 for pregnancy and parenting support and protection to an  
10 office of the institution. The institution must post the  
11 name, location, and contact information of the office on the  
12 institution's internet site. The responsibilities assigned to  
13 the office include but are not limited to maintaining current  
14 knowledge of Code provisions relating to accommodations afforded  
15 to pregnant students and students who recently gave birth;  
16 overseeing institution compliance with Code provisions relating  
17 to accommodations afforded to pregnant students and students who  
18 recently gave birth; and understanding and publicizing specified  
19 topics related to pregnancy and parenting.