

Petition of solidarity with the Philippines.

9/12/06

Messages of support coming in from the Campaign for Ethical Marketing – made live on 8 November 2006. <http://www.babymilkaction.org/CEM/cemnov06.html>

So far 368 signatures have been received from individuals and organisations.

Organisations signing:

IBFAN Europe
Baby Milk Action, UK.
INFACT Canada
IBFAN Italy
The Italian Nestlé Boycott Network
NAFIA, the Nordic Work Group for International Breastfeeding Issues
National Childbirth Trust, UK
Breastfeeding Network, UK
Australian Lactation Consultants Association
Infant Feeding Association of New Zealand
Associazione Culturale Pediatri, Italy (Paediatric Cultural Association)
Peoples Health Movement, USA
KASAPI HELLAS (Greek organisation of Filipino migrants)
Sumisibol (US-Philippines teen cultural exchange organisation)
Philippine Solidarity Group Netherlands
Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto (Federal University of Ouro Preto, Brazil)
Movimento amigos do circuito das águas Mineiro (Movement of Friends of the Waters of Minas Gerais, Brazil)
The University Of Sheffield Union Of Students
Churchties Vlaardingen-La Granja/Bacolod, Netherlands
Athens County WIC, USA.

Messages of support:

Barbara Stocking, Director of Oxfam GB: "Oxfam has supported the campaign for the adoption of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes for three decades. We consider that the protection and support breastfeeding is one of the most important preventive measures Governments can make for the health and survival of infants. Governments must have the right to legislate to end the commercial promotion of baby foods. We extend our support to the Department of Health in its efforts to regulate that market in order to protect the health of Filipino infants. Oxfam is currently working

to support the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Durian, and is aware of how such emergencies exacerbate the risks of artificial feeding."

Belinda Phipps, Executive Director of the National Childbirth Trust, UK: "The National Childbirth Trust, the UK's largest mother-support charity with 70,000 members, is a founder member of Baby Milk Action and has for decades supported IBFAN and governments in the struggle to have the International Code and resolutions adopted as law. We strongly support the efforts by the Philippine Department of Health to protect breastfeeding and believe that the commercial interests should not undermine measures to protect health."

Zöe Wanamaker, actress, UK: "Please send my support to the Philippine Government in their efforts to protect breastfeeding. This is a campaign that is extremely important and I hope that the Department of Health will stand firm against the pressure to weaken the controls on marketing."

Glenys Kinnock MEP, Member of European Parliament's Development and Co-operation Committee. Co-President of the African, Caribbean and Pacific / EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and Labour Party Spokesperson on International Development in the European Parliament wrote: "I'm alarmed to hear of this blatant attack on the Philippine Department of Health's efforts to protect infant health. This is an issue I have been following for a very long time and I have visited the Philippines and seen the devastation that breastmilk substitute promotion can cause. I send my heartfelt support to the Philippine Government at this difficult time. While business interests are important they should not be allowed to take precedence over essential health and consumer protection."

Patricia Andes, Sumisibol (US-Philippines teen cultural exchange organisation), USA: "As a Board Member of Sumisibol, a non-profit that provides cultural and educational programs to Filipino-American teens in New Jersey, I think it's most important to support all children in the Philippines. We need them to survive and build a better country. My mother is an Associate Professor of Obstetrics Nursing and her mother was a midwife from Nueva Vizcaya, and we all support women who breastfeed."

Emma Thompson, Actor, UK: "I'm appalled to hear about this attack on the Philippine Department of Health's courageous action. Surely every government has the right to regulate the marketing of baby foods as they see fit. The impact on health of aggressive marketing is well established and is something I've been personally concerned about for years. I'm sending my message of support to the people of the Philippines saying people around the world are with you and urge you to stand up to this outrageous pressure."

Julie Waters, Actor, UK: "As strong supporter of the Nestle Boycott I send my support to the Philippine Government as they try to protect breastfeeding. This campaign is vital for child survival and I send you all my best wishes"

Simon Barrington-Ward, former Bishop of Coventry, UK: “I wholeheartedly support the campaign against the disgraceful action of companies and the understandable but utterly regrettable decision of the Philippine Supreme Court which, in the face of the appalling power of these companies, has allowed them to stop the Department of Health’s commendable action. I am utterly opposed to the promotion of breastmilk substitutes and as the Bishop of Coventry, have for years campaigned to raise awareness of the harm this causes with my colleagues in the General Synod of the Church of England. Our focus has been on Nestle which I am sad to see, continues to undermine health. Their cunning halfway position is clearly in opposition to the Department of Health’s stand. The two year ban must go ahead. All strength to you.”

Eva Lockner, Sweden: “We in NAFIA, the Nordic Work Group for International Breastfeeding Issues, strongly support Baby Milk Action's international campaign. We urge the Government of the Philippines to resist the attempts to undermine the implementation of Philippines baby milk marketing law.”

Jose Valencia, President, KASAPI HELLAS (Greek organisation of Filipino migrants): “KASAPI HELLAS is the organization of Filipino migrants in Greece which has links with NGOs in Europe, solidarity support networks for the Philippines like FGN of the Netherlands. Even as we work to support our families back home with our remittances, we together with 8 million Filipino migrants spread in 193 countries play an important role in keeping the Philippine economy afloat. We believe migrants must get involved in issues such as the campaign that Baby Milk Action is spearheading. We thank you for keeping the spirit of collective humanity alive!”

Luciana Lee, Movement of Friends of the Waters of Minas Gerais (MACAM), Brazil: “We MACAM support PROMOTION and PROTECTION to well being of Filipino infants in line with the World Health Organisation recommendation that the optimum way to feed a child is exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life followed by the introduction of nutritionally adequate and safe complementary foods while breastfeeding continues for up to two years of age or beyond.”

Marcia Annandale, Coordinator and Trustee, Infant Feeding Association of New Zealand: “The time and effort expended to ensure baby food companies do not undermine the health, nutrition and well-being of vulnerable populations should be absolutely unnecessary. We implore baby food companies start acting responsibly and ethically by accepting the revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Milk Code (EO51). Give breastfeeding back to the mothers and babies. All strength to the women of the Philippines!”

Cris Passos, Federal University of Ouro Preto: “This is the correct way to protect our children.”

Gwen Moody, President, Australian Lactation Consultants Association: “The impact of formula on the health of infants, the mothers and the community at large is profound. The damage done will lead in time to mothers suing those who have supported its

implementation unnecessarily. Also can you afford for your babies to be bottle fed? The health care costs will be phenomenal. The increased infant and young child deaths in Philippines linked with bottle feeding is well documented. Can you afford the drop in intelligence linked with bottle feeding? Can you afford the health impact of obesity when the parents can actually afford to buy sufficient formula? Can you support this when most of your parents who are being pressured into bottle feeding can't afford to buy it as the baby grows?"

Fe Heinen, The Netherlands: "There can be no substitute for mother's milk. Breastfeeding and natural food as well as education regarding its benefits must be aggressively promoted in the Philippines. No to the multinational food products!!! Healthy babies and children mean healthy country."

Julie Marker, UK: "Breast IS best - God created breast milk for His creation."

Jenny Richardson, UK: "Wishing you strength and courage to keep up with your campaign and wisdom and vision of your countries leaders to see that what you are doing is right and that profit should never be but before the lives of babies."

Virginia Moore, USA: "Please continue to support the health of your infants and children with nature's own and not allow companies to intrude on your decisions of breastfeeding."

Linda Nakamura, USA: "Please don't let the pharmaceutical and infant formula companies use their greed to fight against breastfeeding! Babies and toddlers get so much more nutrition and emotional bonding through breastfeeding! Do the right thing!"

Angela Harrison, USA: "Breastfeeding is best for babies. Babies that are fed formula are at a much higher risk for all kinds of diseases, diarrhea, dehydration etc. Please do not let the greedy corporations of the world dictate your policy on this matter."

Shannon Tierney McElearney, MD, USA: "This is so important, for the health of mothers and children."

Melissa Graham, USA: "Breastmilk is the best, and this is ridiculous! Keep up the good fight!"

Lori Miner, USA: "Breastmilk is best, and these formula companies must be stopped!"

Pamelia Jackson, RN, USA: "Please stand up for the improved health of mothers and babies. Please do not allow big business profits to hurt overall community health. Thank you."

Mary Dunlap, USA: "Breastmilk is BEST for babies and Mothers."

Kathryne Heinrichs, USA: “Breastfeeding should not be compromised because some people want to put money in their pockets. Breastfeeding is best!”

Lee Galasso, USA: “It is hard to understand how my own chamber of commerce can fight for the rights of corporations to make more profits while harming children by increasing morbidity and mortality. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is acting against the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The DHHS is struggling to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in the U.S. and loses the battle because the formula companies are so powerful. The companies lobby in Washington, D.C. and win; they successfully solicit the American Academy of Pediatrics' support. Meanwhile the children who are hurt physically or die are helpless to help themselves; we, the adults, are frustrated.”

Megan Elzey, USA: “If people would pay attention to the research (obesity, health, IQ, and on and on), they would realize how important it is for babies to be breastfed for their first years (at least) of life. To ignore the facts and endanger the health and life of babies anywhere for monetary gain is a crime in my opinion.”

Inna Manni, USA: “Help keep baby formula a last resort, not a replacement for mother's milk!”

Christina Johnson, USA: “Mothers were designed to feed their newborns pure, life giving breastmilk. It should not be open for debate because a corporate company wants higher profits. You earn enough feeding the infants who cannot get breastmilk, don't try to make it so no baby gets breastmilk. You do not have that right.”

Rebecca Cook, United States: “For the sake of the babies in your country, please stand up against the formula companies. You're not taking a woman's choice to formula feed, you're taking away the advertising that is given to make women believe that formula is just as good, or close, to breast milk, which is not true. Advertising is the reason that breastfeeding rates in the United States are so low. I wish more countries would adopt this policy!”

Brandi Skidmore, United States: “Breastfeeding is more than just nourishment. It is best for baby and mother, helps ease post partum depression, allows for better bonding between mother and child, allows the economic system to flourish in other markets. Best of all, it is the most loving and protective thing a mother can do for her baby. It lowers overall health costs, dental issues and psychological issues. Breastfeeding forces a new mother to rest and regain her strength after childbirth.”

Breast is just best; it completely outpaces any substitute available.

Melissa Holmes, USA: “Please protect our future generations by supporting breastfeeding infants and their families.”

Meindert Kok, Netherlands: "It's a shame that international companies are interfering with Philippine law making at the expense of the life of infants in the Philippines. Only to boost their own profits. Everybody knows that breastfeed is the best an infant can get."

Linda van Dommelen, Netherlands: "I've been in the Philippines for one year, during that year I've heard a lot about nestlé and its bad policy's. Now I'm boycotting nestlé for almost 2 years already and I try to spread my idea's about it every where. Just keep up the good work!"

Jane Toxward, Australia: "Please continue to stand up for breastfeeding babies and children."

Titch Davis, UK: "One day these people who are stopping the natural way for babies to grow by breastfeeding, will see that making money on the young, will not help the world they are living in or their children. Can't they see that you can not eat money and money alone and that is what will happen one day, maybe not in their life time, but I'm sure some of these people do have children themselves, will they like to eat money. I really find it hard to understand where these people come from and where they are going, do they not care about the world and the children who are going to run and care for this world one day. I'm sending healing to all the babies, Mums and Dads and may they be at peace, I will also send healing to the people who want to stop the natural way for babies to grow and wish them peace within their hearts."

Kim Raynard, Canada: "God Bless you all. Keep up your efforts, you're making a difference."

Lesley Ibbotson, UK: "Keep it up, it matters."

Erin Riley, United States: "Your children will thank you."

Vanessa Mallari, Philippines: "All Filipinos who value the life of their children commend and support Sec. Duque's and the government's stand on this issue...please continue the fight and don't give in to the unreasonable pressure and bullying of selfish milk companies."

Michael Reyes, Philippines: "I support the Philippines' stand on recommending Breastfeeding and Mother's breastmilk over artificial or formulated breastmilk substitutes. The health of Filipino infants should be a foremost national policy and should be put into jeopardy. We Filipinos should not bow to pressures exerted by these companies who do not care for anything except to make profits. Mabuhay ang Filipinas!"

Wayne Burt, Canada: "I am a Canadian and today was cared for by a Filipino hairdresser and physio therapist so I in return support her children."

Orenzo Zivolak, Australia: “Breasts are for feeding babies! Shame on those companies who try to make mothers feel shame for feeding their babies in the most natural way possible. Viva breastfeeding mummies!”

Patrick McDonald, B.Sc., B.Ed., Canada: “Surely the lives of your most vulnerable citizens come before the economic pressures exerted by the United States. To give in to these only stirs up unrest in the population, especially those who have rejected non-violent means of effecting change. Please stand firm!”

Nicole Hughes, New Zealand: “A mother's breast milk is the gift of life. There is no substitute. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce should be ashamed of themselves for pressuring the Phillipines to alter their regulations at the risk of the infants of the Phillipines. How dare they mask their money hungry tactics as something they claim to be a healthy form of nutrition for these babies. It's disgusting.”

Rachel Sutton, Canada: “It's amazing that you almost had legislative support for the International Code on Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Shame on the US Chamber of Commerce for interfering with this initiative!”

Kimberly Alvisi, Canada: “Dear Govenment of the Phillipines, You have the opportunity in your hands to be a strong international leader in supporting and stressing the importance of breastfeeding the children of your country. This will send such an important message to the rest of the world . . . that your are an INTERNATIONAL LEADER. We in Canada could only wish that our government had the leadership to be the first to stand up for such an important issue that can make such a profound improvement on the quality of life for our children. Unfortunately, our government are followers who wait for the lead of others on everything and anything. BE THE LEADER AND STAND STRONG FOR BREASTFEEDING!”

Maria Huff, UK: “Mothers the world over want to do the best for their children. Your legislation will help them get even-handed advice - and stop them being targeted by underhand marketing techniques.”

Kenneth Bowes, Canada: “As a Healthcare professional I am appalled that such blatant comercialization and bullying by major international business can occur with the outcome one of negatively affecting the health and welfare of those too young to fend for themselves. “

Catherine R. Phillips, Canada: “This is a very important issue so please, stand up for the nutritional needs of infants in your country.”

Lisa Russell, United States: “You have worldwide support!! Some days, it must not feel like it - but you have it!!”

Danielle Haughan, England: “Keep doing what you're doing. People in England are taking notice and are willing to stand up and defend the rights of families and their children to proper health care and feeding advice.”

Cayo Alba, USA: “Your breastfeeding sisters in America support you!!! Thank you for standing up to these bullies!”

Regina Machado Garcez, Brazil: “‘When money talks, morality walks.’ How true this sentence is, and how we, as humans, are wrong in "forgetting" respect, ethics and some few universal ever-lasting principles.”

M. Sanche, Canada: “Please do not sacrifice your own babies for commercial interests!”

John Taylor, Canada: “Good luck and best wishes in your struggle against these greedy companies and their uncaring American fan club !”

Karen O'Brien, Canada: “Please do not let the economic interests of the United States (or any other country) cause you to make decisions contrary to the health and wellbeing of your own citizens. I was so impressed with the courage of your government to take a stand in the protection of infants, the most vulnerable of your citizens. I am appalled that the US Chamber of Commerce would have the arrogance to use pressure on your government for their own economic wellbeing.”

Claire Wellesbury, England:” I am very fortunate to have visited the Philippines and experienced the overwhelming hospitality and kindness of the people there. I am absolutely sickened to learn of the practices carried out by these companies towards the people of the Philippines in the pursuit of financial gain. It is, without doubt, a complete and utter disgrace. Such companies, in my opinion, should be held to account for this and be regulated in such a way that this is not able to happen. Protection and empowerment should be afforded to the families of the Philippines. Unbiased reliable information must be provided to them so that they are able to make their own informed choices for nurturing their children.”

Lisa Northover, England: “I offer my support in putting the health and wellbeing of Mothers and babies before company profits.”

Jenifer Inman, England: “The health of the children of the Philippines is of far greater importance than the accumulation of profits by baby milk companies. It is shameful that companies and individuals should undermine the health of babies purely to make money.”

Veronica Daly, Ireland: “Each baby deserves the best start in life,woman are undermined every day world wide by the actions of the multinational companies. Keep up your good work you will make a difference !!!!”

Madeline Pecora Nugent, USA: “Let's let moms breastfeed babies. That saves lives.”

Elaine Blodgett, USA: “Support people, not corporations. Do not let yourself be bullied by these outrageously inhuman beings. They are not supported by the citizens of their countries.”

Ron and Pauline LeBlanc, Canada: “We're thinking of your country and protection of breastfeeding for your children.”

Evelyn te Nyenhuis RN, BScN, IBCLC, RLC, Canada: “Invest in the health of your babies, not American companies.”

Marie Courdent, France: “Breast is best everywhere in the world.”

Margarete Meier, France: “I would appreciate if your first and main concern are the children and their well-being and not the economic interest.”

Mary Parish, England: “From my work in a "bustee" health project in Pakistan some years ago, I know how vital it is to support and encourage breast feeding of infants. I fully endorse this protest.”

Alex Smith, Wales: “Breast milk is a priceless commodity that must safeguarded at all costs. Large business organisations could earn real prestige by publically supporting this campaign and cheerfully embracing any fall in profits - a fall that would reflect their moral and ethical standing in the world.”

Caleb Anderson, New Zealand: “Do the right thing.”

Leslie White, Canada: “I admire the Philippines taking this strong action to protect infants. Infant health should always take precedent over corporate interests.”

Philip Luscombe, UK: “Don't give in, keep fighting.”

Jacqueline Haskell, France: “Please do the right thing and put babies and their mothers before company profits.”

Sofia Brycock, UK: “Please protect your infants - they are your future!”

Theresa Young, Canada: “The health of children should come before the profits of any company. This should not even be an issue. Protect Filipino children's right to be breastfed.”

Vanessa Pruitt, USA: “My son is 5 months old and exclusively breastfed. Say no to pressuring formula companies. Breastmilk is best for our babies, and it's free.”

Mrs Dell, UK: “If you protect your children's health by protecting breastfeeding, you'll be protecting your country's future.”

K. Jean Cotterman RNC, IBCLC, USA: “Please do not let yourself be threatened by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce interfering with the health of Filipino babies and mothers for the sake of the profit of U.S pharmaceutical/formula companies. Continue to keep in front of you the best interests of the physical and mental health of your future citizens.”

Helen Schwalm, Canada: “Please do not be influenced by people who are only interested in making huge profits. They do not care about the health and well being of your children. Breastfeeding is normal, natural and the healthiest way to feed, nurture and bond with your child. We should not allow the Formula companies to influence policy of governments so that they can undermine breastfeeding and add to poverty, sickness and death in children.”

Caleb Anderston, Canada: “Do the right thing.”

Virginia Thorley, International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, Cultural historian within the History of Medicine, Australia: “It disturbs me to see yet another example of outside interests (including the American Chamber of Commerce and the local association of foreign-based manufacturers) attempting - yet again - to undermine the laws and regulations of a sovereign country. I hope the Philippines Government will resist these attempts and show courage and leadership in protecting infant health by retaining and implementing the revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Milk Code (EO51) of the Department of Health.”

Kym Oconnor, USA: “Please save the precious babies and educate mothers to know how to breastfeed. God's perfect design, there is nothing better on this earth for the children.”

Adrian Uittermark, UK: “Good luck and stick to your principles!”