Dear <Insert candidate's name>

The Australian Breastfeeding Association is Australia’s peak body for breastfeeding information, education and support.

Through the provision of practical mother-to-mother peer support, up-to-date and evidence-based information and continuing education for health care workers, ABA helps hundreds of thousands of families each year on their breastfeeding journey.

As detailed in the Australian Government's [2019 National Breastfeeding Strategy](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022/03/australian-national-breastfeeding-strategy-2019-and-beyond.pdf), breastfeeding is recognised as highly valuable from economic and social perspectives, in addition to the lifelong health and preventative health benefits for mothers and children.

At the time of Australia’s last national infant feeding survey in 2010, 96% of new mums in Australia planned to breastfeed their baby.

ABA has 3 priorities for this election outlined in our document, [ABA Election priorities 2025](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/sites/default/files/2025-03/ABA-ElectionPriorities-202503.pdf).

As a member of your electorate, I am interested in your or your party’s commitments in relation to these priorities. I would appreciate your answers to the following four questions.

Full funding for ABA's National Breastfeeding Helpline

ABA’s National Breastfeeding Helpline counsels more than 52,000 families each year and is staffed by trained volunteers who listen, reassure and offer options to the women and families that call. LiveChat offers a web-based chat service that receives more than 5000 chats from women and families each year. Both Helpline and LiveChat rely on federal government funding to operate, and ABA can plan their services and support better if longer term funding is assured.

*Q. Will your party or you as an Independent candidate, prioritise full, 4-year funding for ABA's Breastfeeding Helpline and LiveChat services?*

Legislation of controls of marketing of infant formula in Australia

With the expiry of the previous voluntary industry code – the Marketing in Australia of Infant Formula: Manufacturers and Importers (MAIF) Agreement, the next government must design and pass into legislation a comprehensive and mandatory national code that reflects the full scope of the International Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent WHA resolutions (the WHO Code). Families in Australia should be able to make informed decisions about infant feeding without being influenced by commercial interests.

*Q. Will your party or you as an Independent candidate, commit to enacting legislation of new controls of the marketing of breastmilk substitutes in Australia that encompass the full scope of the WHO Code?*

Repeat of the National Infant Feeding Survey

The Australian National Infant Feeding Survey was undertaken for the first time in 2010 and has not been repeated since. We value what we can measure. Measuring population-wide rates of initiation and duration of breastfeeding at 5-year intervals will guide and measure the impact of policy and interventions over time. The methodology of the Australian National Infant Feeding Survey remains the gold standard and would not require modification to be repeated.

*Q. Will your party or you as an Independent candidate commit to ensuring that there is a 2025 repeat of the National Infant Feeding Survey?*

Improved access to continuity of maternity care

There is strong evidence that continuity of maternity care, particularly midwifery-led care provides better breastfeeding outcomes for mothers and babies. Pregnant women in Australia want continuity of care and current access is insufficient. [The Woman Centre-Care Strategy 2019](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/11/woman-centred-care-strategic-directions-for-australian-maternity-services.pdf), includes improved access to these models of care as a priority.

*Q. Will your party or you as an Independent candidate, commit to increasing access to continuity of care to pregnant women in Australia?*

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions, I look forward to your responses. I would also like the opportunity to discuss these priorities for the upcoming federal election with you in-person, please advise when this would be possible.

Yours sincerely,