

Title: Free Menstrual Products in Public Schools

Introduced By: Nicklas Bara for the Medical Student Section

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Referred To: Reference Committee D

House Action: **APPROVED**

Whereas, menstruation continues to be a highly stigmatizing issue for individuals with periods in the United States, and

Whereas, a lack of access to menstrual products adversely impacts the health, well-being, and academic performance of menstruating students, and

Whereas, a lack of access to menstrual products is associated with poor mental health outcomes, such as elevated anxiety, depression, and distress, and

Whereas, according to a 2019 article in Women's Reproductive Health, out of 693 19–25-year-old students, a lack of access to menstrual products resulted in 12.7 percent of students missing school, 15.01 percent of students being late to school, 23.91 percent leaving school early, and 17.6 percent of students reporting that it has a negative impact on their learning ability, and

Whereas, in a 2018 survey from the Society of Women’s Health Research, 362 school nurses across elementary, middle, and high schools over the United States reported that 75 percent of bathrooms in schools were not well-stocked with menstrual products, and

Whereas, an organization advocating for menstrual products in school found that 23 percent of students ages 13-19 in 2021 said they struggled to afford menstrual products, with the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacting resources, and

Whereas, the government funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food-stamps) does not allow individuals to buy menstrual products with these funds, and

Whereas, according to government programs like a Health Savings Account or Flexible Spending Account, funds like menstrual products are considered a qualified medical expense, and

Whereas, 25 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation that helps provide free menstrual products in schools, and

Whereas, an advocacy group focused on getting period products in state budgets estimates that it costs \$5-7 per year per student to supply period products, and

48 Whereas, providing free menstrual products in school restrooms can potentially decrease
49 gender discrimination and help open conversations and decrease stigma surrounding menstrual
50 health; and therefore be it

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52 RESOLVED: That MSMS encourage all Michigan school districts, other public schools, and
53 chartered nonpublic schools that enrolls girls in grades 6-12 to provide free tampon and pad
54 products to those students; and be it further

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56 RESOLVED: That MSMS encourage each district or school to provide tampon and pad
57 products to students below grade 6 and to inform students where the products are kept in the
58 school.

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61 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: \$1,000-\$2,000

Relevant MSMS Policy - None

Relevant AMA Policy

Increasing Access to Hygiene and Menstrual Products H-525.973

Our AMA: (1) recognizes the adverse physical and mental health consequences of limited access to menstrual products for school-aged individuals; (2) supports the inclusion of medically necessary hygiene products, including, but not limited to, menstrual hygiene products and diapers, within the benefits covered by appropriate public assistance programs; (3) will advocate for federal legislation and work with state medical societies to increase access to menstrual hygiene products, especially for recipients of public assistance; and (4) encourages public and private institutions as well as places of work and education to provide free, readily available menstrual care products to workers, patrons, and students.

Sources:

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