

SB0427 - Public Schools – Provision of Menstrual Hygiene Products

Presented to the Hon. Paul Pinsky of the Senate Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee
February 11, 2021 11:00 a.m.

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Paul Pinsky of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

In 2019, 43.2% of Maryland public school students enrolled for free and reduced-price meals, indicating that their families struggled to afford basic necessities. Many students are of menstruating age. With this statistic and the state of COVID-19 exacerbating financial and racial disparities in mind, we urge you to support HB0205 to help provide free, quality menstrual products to public school students. Your support of this crucial legislation demonstrates your commitment to basic hygiene, gender equality, public health, and providing essential healthcare because menstrual health is healthcare.

A lack of access to menstrual products can significantly impact students' education, forcing them to miss class time or not participate fully due to fear of leakage. A recent New York study revealed that school attendance increased when students were provided with free menstrual hygiene products. Increased school attendance further allows female students to succeed in their academic and extracurricular goals and helps bridge gaps caused by poverty.

We are signing onto this letter because period poverty disproportionately impacts students of color from low-income families. Providing free menstrual hygiene products is a monumental step in bridging academic opportunities and reaching menstrual equity. We strongly urge you a favorable report on SB0427 and the fight for menstrual equity.

Joe Spielberger, ACLU of Maryland

Ann Steinberg, Baltimore Hebrew Congregation Task Force on Long Range Planning

Prof. Margaret E. Johnson, Center on Applied Feminism - University of Baltimore

Maeve Sanford-Kelly, Maryland High School Democrats

Jessica Morgan, Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

Sandy Bell, Maryland National Organization for Women

Jeannette Feldner, Montgomery County NOW

C.R. Valeriann, Baltimore NOW

Julia Gross, Marylanders Against Poverty

Diana Philip, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland

Ela Jalil, PERIOD at Winston Churchill High School

Sara Carney & Ellie Frisch, Period Poverty Project

Ashley, Black, Public Justice Center

Kimberly Haven, Reproductive Justice Inside

Kaprece James, Stella's Girls Incorporated

Shamoyia Gardiner, Strong Schools Maryland

Michelle Siri, Women's Law Center of Maryland

Lindsay M. Harris