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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 757: Local Health Departments and Community Action Agencies – Feminine Hygiene Products

When times get tough for many low income families they often have to make hard choices and make sacrifices just to survive. People with uteruses when forced to cut back will choose to provide food for their family and diapers for their baby before even considering spending some of their limited capital on menstrual products. Local and State run food and resource pantries have seen drastic increases in the number of families who come to rely on them for subsistence in the last year.

One of the hardest products to keep in stock is menstrual and feminine hygiene products due to both the high demand, and high cost to the providers to supply them. Not having access to menstrual products for those who need them can lead to adverse health effects and impacts the autonomy, and mental wellbeing of those in need. These populations in need of menstrual products are overwhelmingly communities of color. Lack of access to these essential health products is not just a health issue but one of racial equity. **Menstrual health should not be a luxury for those who can afford it.**

HB 757 will allow for local health departments to supply menstrual products to populations who are enrolled in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program. Local health departments are integrated into existing community structures and make them ideal to distribute these products. They are trusted within the community and should not be an undue responsibility for these providers

There have been other bills both this and last session working to expand access to menstrual products to both incarcerated individuals and students. I am seeking to build on the esteemed work of my colleagues and I ask for a favorable report on HB 757.