



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 24, 2026

House Bill 457
Institutions of Higher Education - Provision of Menstrual Hygiene Products -
Requirement
House Appropriations Committee

Position: Favorable with Amendment

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 457 requires each institution of higher education to provide, free of charge, menstrual hygiene products in all restrooms at the institution on or before August 1, 2028.

Providing menstrual hygiene products in women's restrooms is an important way to promote health equity, dignity, and public health. Research shows that lack of access to pads and tampons contributes to what is called "period poverty"—a situation where individuals cannot afford or obtain these essential products—leading to health risks such as urinary tract infections and missed school or work days.¹ Period poverty affects millions, including youth and low-income women, and can disrupt education and daily life when products are unavailable.

Placing products in women's restrooms acknowledges that menstruation is a natural biological process experienced by women and affirms their needs in the spaces they use most. Studies and surveys also show strong public support for making products available in restrooms because having them there prevents embarrassment, reduces shame and stigma, and helps individuals participate fully in school, work, and community life without interruption.² To ensure accessibility for everyone who menstruates, any supplied products should be placed in a way that meets ADA compliance. This ensures both privacy and physical access for women with

¹ https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases-from-aap-conferences/period-poverty-research-finds-1-in-3-teens-lack-access-to-menstruation-products/?utm_source

² chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://allianceforperiodsupplies.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Executive-Summary-U.S.-Attitudes-Towards-the-Availability-of-Menstrual-Supplies-in-Public-Schools-and-Public-Universities.pdf?utm_source

disabilities. Clear signage and education on proper use and disposal should also accompany product placement, recognizing that many women and girls may lack menstrual health education regardless of age.

Proposed Amendment:

11-2002.

On or before August 1, 2028, each institution of higher education shall provide, free of charge, menstrual hygiene products in all women's restrooms.

By focusing provision on women's restrooms, this policy supports women's health, respects the natural distinctions in biological sex, and affirms the dignity of women as they manage a normal bodily function with privacy and respect.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable with amendment report on **HB 457**.

Thank you for your consideration.