

Jaden T. Farris
Director of Government Relations



Qamryn Askew
Director of Government Relations

BILL: HB 457 - Institutions of Higher Education - Provision of Menstrual Hygiene Products - Requirement

COMMITTEE: Appropriations

DATE: February 24, 2026

POSITION: FAVORABLE

The University System of Maryland Student Councils(USMSC) represents over 170,000 undergraduate and graduate students across the University System of Maryland's 12 institutions and 3 regional higher education centers. As such, we are in full support of House Bill 457, which requires each institution of higher education to provide menstrual hygiene products, free of charge.

Menstrual products are not a luxury good, but a health necessity. However, many college students experience “period poverty” which means they do not have regular access to these basic items. Studies have shown that one in six college students have been unable to afford menstrual products and over half of students have had their academics interrupted by menstruation. These disruptions include missing class, arriving late, leaving early, or avoiding campus facilities altogether.¹

For students already struggling with the cost of tuition, housing, food insecurity, and employment, adding the cost of menstrual products to the list can be a substantial financial challenge. Providing free menstrual products in campus restrooms is a straightforward, practical solution that promotes equity, dignity, and access. Students cannot fully participate in their education if a basic biological function becomes a barrier to attendance or concentration. This bill ensures that no student is forced to choose between attending class and taking care of their health.

The USMSC recognizes that access to menstrual supplies is a concern of educational equity and public health. No student should have their educational experience disrupted by an inability to access necessary supplies.

For these reasons, the University System of Maryland Student Council respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 457.

Jaden T. Farris
Director of Government Relations
jadenfarris@umbc.edu

Qamryn Askew
Director of Government Relations
qaskew1@umbc.edu

¹ Sacca, L., Lobaina, D., Burgoa, S., Jhumkhwala, V., Rao, M., Okwaraji, G., Zerrouki, Y., Sohmer, J., Knecht, M., Mejia, M. C., & Kitsantas, P. (2025). Period Poverty and Barriers to Menstrual Health Equity in U.S. Menstruating College Students: A Scoping Review. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 22(4), 619. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22040619>