

**SHELLY HETTLEMAN**  
*Legislative District 11*  
Baltimore County

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Pensions

Chair, Public Safety, Transportation,  
and Environment

*Senate Chair*

Joint Audit and Evaluation  
Committee



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 220  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3131  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3131  
[shelly.hettleman@senate.maryland.gov](mailto:shelly.hettleman@senate.maryland.gov)

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

**Senator Shelly Hettleman Testimony in Support of SB 307**  
**Public Schools - Restocking Menstrual Hygiene Products - Requirement**

**THE PROBLEM**

When originally asked to file SB307, I initially said no. I didn't think there should need to be a bill about requiring schools to ensure that the dispensers of menstrual hygiene products be filled -- it couldn't possibly be a widespread problem. Perhaps it was only an issue in Howard County, where the House sponsor is from. And then I began my research and asked the young people I know to ask their friends in Baltimore County Public Schools whether this is a problem. And, to my surprise: it was a problem and it's a problem all over. Just last week, I met with a group of Maryland High School Democrats - mostly students from Montgomery County and a few from Baltimore County and Harford County. When I described the bill, their heads started to nod: this was an issue that they too had experienced. This is a ridiculous but necessary bill - in 2021 that this body passed a bill that required menstrual products to be shared in school bathrooms. It is an unfortunate, but a necessary reality, that we need this bill to accomplish what should have been realized in 2021.

As forementioned, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2021 that required menstrual product dispensers to be installed in our public middle and high schools. That was an important and meaningful step forward in addressing period poverty and advancing educational equity. However, we have learned since then is that installation alone is not enough. The original statute required that dispensers be placed in schools; it did not explicitly require that they be regularly restocked. And so, across multiple counties, not just in one district or region, students are encountering empty dispensers. When that happens, the promise of the 2021 law is undermined, and its purpose is defeated.

An empty dispenser sends the wrong message. Menstrual products are not optional. They are basic health necessities. When students cannot access them, they miss instructional time, experience unnecessary stress and embarrassment, or leave school early. That burden falls most heavily on students from low-income households, compounding disparities in attendance and academic performance that we are already working so hard to close.

## THE SOLUTION

This bill is not an expansion of the original mandate. It does not create a new program. It simply ensures that the program we already enacted works as intended. **By requiring that dispensers be regularly restocked, we close an implementation gap and make access to menstrual products reliable and real — not symbolic.** This bill has no state fiscal impact. It clarifies existing law and aligns with the legislature's original intent, without imposing new financial burdens on local governments. What it does impose is accountability.

At its core, this legislation is about dignity, health, and equal access to education. No student should have to worry about managing a normal biological process while trying to focus on algebra, history, or preparing for their future. By passing this bill, we reaffirm our commitment to equity and to ensuring that every student in Maryland has the supportive learning environment they deserve.

I respectfully urge the Committee to give SB307 a favorable report. Thank you for your time and consideration.