

Rep. Sargent: A crucial step in bringing menstrual equality to Wisconsin

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MADISON – Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) released the following statement regarding the release of LRB-3714/1, relating to the provision of menstrual products in state and local buildings and school buildings:

“Menstrual products are necessities, not luxuries, and the over 50% of the population who menstruate here in Wisconsin should not have to continue to face the undue and unjust burdens of inaccessibility to essential hygiene products. For far too long, menstruation has been stigmatized, hidden, and treated with shame and derision. The reality is that, on average, individuals who menstruate have their periods for 2,535 days throughout their lifetimes– nearly 7 years of menstruation that requires access to tampons and/or sanitary napkins. Further, the average menstruating person uses almost 17,000 tampons or pads in their life, while one study found that 2 out of 3 people living below the poverty line have experienced having to go without hygiene products due to costly expenses. Lacking access to period care has serious implications, from poor health outcomes and lost work and educational instruction hours to demoralization and embarrassment for those unable to afford essential hygiene products. No one should have to miss work or school, risk their health, or compromise their dignity, because they menstruate. The ability to manage this normal bodily function is a necessity, not an entitlement or privilege, and is oftentimes an urgent, unexpected need. Menstrual products are not a luxury good, nor a government handout—when those who do not menstruate walk into a public restroom they have everything they need to take care of ordinary

bodily functions, while those who do menstruate do not. Further, data from programs around the nation show that the cost of providing these products is significantly less than the cost of soap, toilet paper, paper towel, and other bathroom supplies currently being provided in bathrooms everywhere. Menstrual products are not optional, they're necessities, and no individual should have to be without menstrual products when they are in need— especially in our schools and state and local buildings. As such, today I am proud to introduce LRB-3714/1, which will take crucial steps in helping to bring menstrual equality to Wisconsin by providing menstrual products in state, local, and school buildings.”