



Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys and YWCA Minneapolis
Supports HF44/SF50 - Submitted January 17, 2023

Members of the MN House Education Finance Committee & Senate Education Policy Committee:

Girl Scouts River Valleys is the local council of Girl Scouts of the USA, a registered 501(c)3 organization and the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. Girl Scouts aims to offer every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. Girl Scouts River Valleys serves over 29,000 members.

YWCA Minneapolis is one of more than 200 local associations under YWCA USA, the oldest multicultural organization in the nation, all sharing the mission of eliminating racism, empowering women and girls, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. YWCA Minneapolis provides health and wellness, early childhood education, racial justice and public policy engagement, workforce development, and one of the largest in and out of school time girls & youth programs in the Twin Cities Metro area. YWCA Minneapolis impacted over 15,000 community members in our last fiscal year, including over 700 young people.

We are writing today in support of HF44/SF50 which would require schools to provide menstrual products to students at no cost. Girl Scouts and YWCA have been serving Minnesota for 109 and 130 years respectively and we are uniquely positioned to know the challenges girls face every day.

Period poverty, the inability to afford menstrual products, can result in missed classes which can put a student at risk for chronic absenteeism. A study found one year of chronic absenteeism from 8th-12th grade was associated with a seven-fold increase in the likelihood of dropping out. Period poverty can also result in stress, embarrassment, shame and even life-threatening health issues. This added pressure comes at a crucial time in development, when major depression is on the rise for teen girls and 70% of US teens suffer from loneliness.

We ask that that you support HF44/SF50 which alleviates a significant burden for youth at a critical time in their lives. We would be happy to further discuss with any of you the details of our support for this issue, please feel free to reach out at any time to Sara Gangelhoff, Advocacy and Community Relations Manager at Girl Scouts River Valleys, advocacy@girlscoutsrv.org or Luna Allen-Bakerian, Public Policy Manager at YWCA Minneapolis, luna.ab@ywcamppls.org.

Thank you for your service on this committee and your attention to this bill.

Sara Gangelhoff
Advocacy and Community Relations Manager
Girl Scouts River Valleys
Saint Paul, MN

Luna Allen-Bakerian
Public Policy Manager
YWCA Minneapolis
Minneapolis, MN

Date of Hearing: Tuesday, January 24, 2023

To: Chair Cwodzinski and members of the Senate Education Finance Committee

From: Sam Goldsmith, Luverne High School, 709 N. Kniss Avenue, Luverne, MN 56156

Chair Cwodzinski and members of the Senate Education Finance Committee, my name is Sam Goldsmith. I am in my 29th year of teaching Social Studies to high school students. I spent 28 years at Worthington High School and am now at Luverne High School. I am a mother to 2 teenagers, and have mentored young women for decades. I support SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

The horror is real. Leaking. Pre-teen and adolescent bodies are not regular. Many girls fear where they will be when it will happen. It was my reality in 8th grade. It wasn't my first period, but it was my first period with a heavy flow. I had 2 pads that did not make it through the day. I had already bled through a pair of shorts and had to wear my gym shorts the rest of the day- gym shorts that did not coordinate with my outfit. They were light lilac in color. And I bled through them as well. I had no other products, and I was mortified to ask anyone. No amount of rolled up toilet paper in my underwear would change that. I sat in my desk and had friends turn in my assignments in the front of the classroom. I finally made it to my locker and found a windbreaker to tie around my waist. I left blood on every chair. It was horrifying and embarrassing. Then and now, menstrual experiences are not normalized, even though menstruation is, and has been, a natural part of female development.

My daughter will, hopefully, never have such an experience. I am able to provide her with an assortment of menstrual products at home, in her school, bag and in her locker. I have normalized menstruation. I also provide pads and tampons to my students. I can afford to purchase the supplies with my own money and I recognize that is a privilege. But I am only one teacher, in one classroom, in one high school in Minnesota. And with a growing number of male school nurses, girls and young women need free access to supplies in bathrooms, without asking for them from any nurse. Not all girls and young women have access to an open home environment where discussions about menstruation happen freely and without embarrassment. Menstruation has not been normalized throughout the world. Even more, many girls and young women come from homes lacking the economic resources to purchase the products, which continue to rise in cost. Access to these products can be an economic challenge as costs have increased."Average prices rose 8.3% for a package of menstrual pads and 9.8% for tampons in the year [2022]."

(<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-09/inflation-is-pushing-tampon-prices-up-10>). In times of economic uncertainty, women can find alternatives (socks, diapers, washcloths), or quit using hygiene products (stay at home until the period is complete). A 'typical' period can last up to 7 or 8 days. School attendance can be greatly impacted each month. Access to menstrual products are a necessity. And menstrual blood should not be differentiated from other

types of blood, or physical need. Much like access to toilet paper, school-sponsored snacks, meals, tissues, band-aids, gauze, athletic tape, and counseling services, free access to menstrual pads and tampons in Minnesota schools is overdue and is necessary.

Period poverty is a real issue affecting women in the United States. What this means is that many women are experiencing an inability to access menstrual products, for a variety of reasons beyond their control. The most vulnerable of these women are the girls and young women whose menstrual cycles are unreliable. And even with menstrual certainty, the cost to 'deal with' a period continues to burden many families.

I support this bill and ask, on behalf of the girls and young women in Minnesota, please normalize menstrual experiences and provide menstrual supplies in all bathrooms.

In 2022, studies have shown that 23% of students have difficulty affording menstrual products- making it even more difficult for low-income students to attend and succeed in school.

ACCORDING TO WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH, 37 STATES INTRODUCED BILLS ABOUT PERIOD EQUITY IN 2021



IN ALL MV
BATHROOMS:

**FREE
PERIOD
PRODUCTS**

MAY 10 | 7 PM
MOUNDS VIEW PUBLIC
SCHOOLS BOARD MEETING

According to
NPR NEWS,

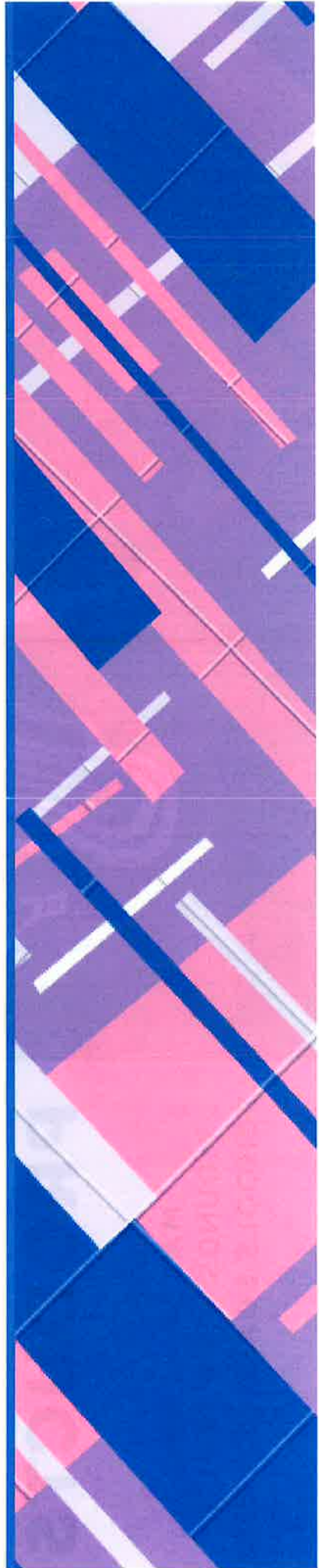
4/5

menstruating teens
have either missed
class or know
someone who has
missed class
because they didn't
have access to
period products.

LET'S END PERIOD POVERTY IN THE MOUNDS VIEW PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT!



Bill HF2750 was
proposed in the
Minnesota House of
Representatives this past
February. We need to
support this bill at a
legislative level, but let's
ensure that at the district
level, we have backing
for this essential, common
issue.



To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Zara Fakier , 2623 Yosemite Ave S St. Louis Park MN

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Zara Fakier and I am a sophomore at St. Louis Park High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

We need menstrual products in all school bathrooms because the lack of it is the cause of students missing school everyday. We deserve to go to school with the right supplies and not have to worry about leaking in class. School already forces pressures on us and this just makes it even harder. If we are finally all given products then students will feel safer, cared for, and respected.



January 10, 2023

Senator Steve Cwodzinski
Education Policy Committee

Dear Chair Cwodzinski,

As the President and CEO of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota, I write to express our support for SF50 which will provide students with access to menstrual products at no charge.

For 40 years, the Women's Foundation has invested more than \$35 million in community investments across the state, and advanced policy to create a state where women, girls, and their families thrive. With the Center on Women, Gender, & Public Policy at the Humphrey School, we produce the state's leading [research](#) on the well-being of women and girls every two years. At WFMN, we use an intersectional equity lens to assess problems and we listen with intention to community members about their lived experiences and their ideas for solutions. In all of our work, we center and amplify the voices of communities who are most impacted by policy and, too often, least heard from in the policy arena.

No student in Minnesota should miss out on their education because they need access to menstrual products. Too often, students who cannot afford, or do not have access to, period products miss school to avoid potential embarrassment or the discomfort of having to deal with their period without supplies. Other students miss class time because when they need menstrual products, they must first get permission from a teacher to go to the nurse's office, then make the trip to a nurse's office, wait for the nurse to be available, and finally, in many schools, pay for the supplies. All of this is time away from class that would be restored if every bathroom in schools stocked these products in bathrooms as no cost to students.

Students have been leading efforts in ending period poverty in schools across the state and we applaud and lift their voices. Menstrual supplies are as basic to student bathroom hygiene as paper towels and toilet paper are, and it is past time for the state to ensure free access for these products as well.

We urge you to pass this proposal that will make a big impact in the mental health, confidence, and hygiene of students across the state.

Thank you,

Gloria Perez
CEO/President



Women's Foundation of Minnesota

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Track Trachtenberg, 3325 Pillsbury Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55408

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Track Trachtenberg and I am a Minneapolis resident and former staff member in a Minneapolis high school. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Putting free period products in bathrooms will enable all menstruating students to feel comfortable and focus on school. As a former youth worker, I know that it was disruptive and embarrassing for students to not have menstrual products when they needed them - either because they forgot or because they couldn't afford them. No student should have their learning disrupted, or risk missing school, because they have their period. I am eager for us to reach a world where menstrual products are like soap and toilet paper - an automatic thing that each restroom should have.

I am also hopeful that once this bill is passed, it is implemented in a way that reaches all students who menstruate, and therefore there are some products included in gender-neutral and boy's restrooms as well. All students deserve to have their basic needs met at school.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Taubie Sanders

424 Yosemite Ave. N

Golden Valley, MN 55422

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh and committee members, my name is Taubie Sanders and I am a freshman at the University of Denver and a graduate of Hopkins High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Putting free period products in bathrooms will enable all menstruating students to have the same educational opportunities as their peers. By having free period products in all Minnesota school bathrooms, menstruators will not have to miss extensive amounts of class and stigma surrounding menstruation will be lessened. Myself and my peers have all dealt with negative and embarrassing menstruation experiences in school that have interfered with our education and put us at a disadvantage. With free period products in school bathrooms these experiences would not exist.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Sandy Velazquez, 1425 Galtier St., Saint Paul, MN

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Sandy Velazquez and I am a Health Mentor at El Colegio High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

As a Health Mentor my role at El Colegio is to provide students with resources and information on how to keep their bodies healthy. Part of that includes providing education on topics like puberty and naturally menstruation, and so access to menstrual products. I currently help stock one of the school bathrooms with these types of resources and this being my 2nd year here at the school managing those resources, I see first had the high need the students have when it comes to having access to these resources. You see, at El Colegio we often get students who have recently arrive to the U.S. and most of the time they arrive with hardly anything. So being able to provide these things takes some of the burden off their load and they can instead focus on coming to school and staying in school. I stock these supplies at least once a week and I get these supplies primarily from donations. I also provide 1on1 education to the students and a lot of our students often come and talk to me about their cycle, in one situation we have had special education students going a full day with out being able to change their pads, leading to having them change their clothes due to leaking out, and we have been working with these students to teach them the skills on how to take care of their body, but also being able to stock the bathroom consistently and show these students that we have supplies for them so they don't have to wait all day is key. There also have been a handful of other students who have had to change or go home when accidents happen. As of right now we must keep a stock of not only menstrual products but change of underwear and pants for our students who have accidents to try our best to keep them at school. If we had a more reliable way of sustainably keeping these resources for our students here at school, it would be less of a burden on us the support staff who must continuously try to find donations of both clothes, and hygiene products for our students. If the chairs and committee where to decide to put menstrual products in the school bathrooms across the state of Minnesota, I do believe that we would see more students at school and staying in school. We would be supporting our students who menstruate and demonstrating to them that when we say we care about their overall health and wellbeing, we mean it!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sandy Velazquez

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Robin Philips, 7906 Victoria Curve, St Louis Park, MN 55426

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Robin Phillips and I am the executive director of The Advocates for Human Rights, headquartered in Minneapolis. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Equal access to education and health are fundamental human rights. Recent data indicate that nearly one in five girls has missed school because of lack of access to menstrual products. Removing this barrier to full access to education is a relatively small effort that will have a big impact.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Nurah Muhammad, 9006 Idaho Ave N, 55445

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Nurah Muhammad and I am a student at Osseo Senior High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

As a student, I think that one of the saddest things I witness within school is the lack of period products. Other females my age are not being able to come to school because they don't have enough resources to get them through the day. I am very fortunate to have our clubs take initiative and raise fundraisers, collecting necessities for our fellow students, however I don't believe it should stop with students, which is why I write this. We shouldn't spend our day unsure if what we have is enough to get us through the day, or reliant on someone else. Resources in school should be a necessity. I'm here because I want my fellow peers to be able to walk into the restrooms with a sense of relief, knowing that no matter what they are taken care of.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Natalie Rizkalla, 17708 George Moran Dr, Eden Prairie MN

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Natalie Rizkalla and I am a freshman at Holy Family Catholic High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

I can speak for me and for all my friends knowing that we all have struggles when it comes to our period so having the access to free period products in all bathrooms would for sure make me feel way more comfortable. The struggle can be real so having those products would really relieve some stress off my shoulders. This would help me to excel in school because I wouldn't have to take the time out of class to search for a pad or tampon and I would be able to spend more time in the classroom. I think that this would have a tremendous benefit on all students around the state.



January 8, 2023

Dear Members of the Senate Education Policy and Education Finance Committees:

NAMI Minnesota is writing to express its support for SF50 which would provide access to menstrual products for students.

There have been surveys showing the association between period poverty and depression. Students who cannot afford period products often miss schools and feel shame. The shame can lead to not feeling good about oneself and depression. Not being able to access products can lead to heightened anxiety.

Please take this issue into consideration as you develop your budget proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sue Abderholden".

Sue Abderholden, MPH
Executive Director



1919 University Ave. W., Suite 400, St. Paul, MN
55104 651-645-2948 11-888-NAMI-HELPS I
www.namimn.org



Minnesota Psychological Association

4248 Park Glen Road

Minneapolis, MN 55416

(952) 928-4657

info@mnpsych.org

Dear Chair Steve Cwodzinski and Chair Mary Kunesch:

Minnesota Psychological Association would like to endorse the passage of SF50 to allow financial support for menstrual supplies in bathrooms for girls in public schools. Many of our psychologists work with girls who are impacted by poverty, as well as by mental health issues associated with the onset of menses and the stigma of being female and having limited income. Several studies have shown that girls are maturing younger and the onset of menses starts often in grade school for girls. (See this article <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-are-girls-getting-their-periods-so-young>)

Girls are also likely to have a greater tendency toward depression when affected by early onset menses. (<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/news/20171226/early-puberty-in-girls-may-take-mental-health-tol>) Having the added burden of needing to pay for supplies for her period, while at school, is a health equity issue. This is a health issue that effects female bodies, and it is an unfair burden to have placed on girls as young as seven or eight years old to have to remember to bring money to school in case of getting her period, for which she was unprepared. For these reasons, it makes sense to support the bill to allow girls to have health equity for supplies that they need in public schools.

Sincerely,

Sharon Stein McNamara, Ed.D.,L.P.

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From Maarit Mattson, 20100 Horseshoe Lane, Mankato, Minnesota

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Maarit Mattson and I am fourteen years old. I am a student at Mankato East High School, and I present this statement in support of SF50; which aims to provide access to free menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Providing free period products would remove unnecessary stress from students' everyday lives. Every menstruating individual knows what it's like to be caught off-guard without the supplies you need, but this does not need to be the reality. We can provide students with the period products they need for a safer, more equitable learning experience. Nobody deserves to worry whether they will have access to or be able to afford basic hygiene products while they are at school.

Right now, it is up to students to help provide for themselves and each other. I am currently working with a group of other students to plan a period product drive across my district to make sure that every student has access to the products they need no matter their financial standing.

I am fortunate enough that this is not a concern for me, but many people are not, and access to period products should not be based on the good fortune of the student.



Dear Senator Cwodzinski,

The [Minnesota Society for Public Health Education](#) (MN SOPHE) is a coalition of public health professionals with a mission of exemplifying leadership and strengthening public health education for students and professionals in pursuit of health and wellness. MN SOPHE envisions healthy people, healthy communities, and health equity for all people. For these reasons, MN SOPHE fully supports passage of SF50, which would require school districts and charter schools to supply free menstrual products through a minimal increase of the operating revenue.

According to a nationally representative 2021 survey, 23% of U.S. students struggle to afford menstrual hygiene products¹. This problem is compounded among low-income students and students of color; 23% of Hispanic students said they had to choose between buying menstrual hygiene products or food and clothing compared to 16% of all individuals surveyed¹. Supply chain issues and lack of access to free period products due to COVID-19 related shutdowns have also exacerbated the issue at hand. The 2021 study also found that “more than 4 in 5 students (84%) in the US have either missed class time or know someone who missed class time because they did not have access to period products”¹. Students across the nation report feelings of shame, self-consciousness, and embarrassment about even having their periods which is worsened by lack of access to menstrual products that are needed for an individual to have a healthy menstrual cycle.

The facts show that access to menstrual products will improve numerous health outcomes for youth around the world, though especially in Minnesota where school nurses report that “every single day students come to [the] health office for period products... which many students don’t have the money or the means to get” (2021, S. Gelbard and K. Marohn, MPR News). As a viable solution to the menstrual health disparities that persist due to lack of access to menstrual products, MN SOPHE strongly supports the passage of HF2750 in the 2023 legislative session. Passage of this bill will support bodily autonomy for youth and will end period poverty that exacerbates health inequities that persist in Minnesota, and around the nation.

MN SOPHE urges for the passage of this bill to support the youth of Minnesota today, and of future generations.

Sincerely,

Minnesota Society for Public Health Education
(MN SOPHE)

1. Thinx, & PERIOD. (2021). *State of the Period* [Review of *State of the Period*]. <https://period.org/uploads/State-of-the-Period-2021.pdf>

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Lila Ford, 3120 Birch Avenue MN 55357

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Lila Ford and I am a graduate of Delano High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Putting free period products in bathrooms will enable all menstruating students to feel comfortable and focus on school. I, and many of my friends, have experienced the embarrassment and discomfort that comes with not having a pad or tampon when you need it and it disrupts your day making learning difficult. All menstruators deserve to be able to have their basic needs met at school.



January 3, 2023

Minnesota Senate Education Policy Committee

Dear Chair Cwodzinski and Members of the Senate Education Policy Committee:

Thank you for giving Legal Aid the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of legislation requiring schools to provide access to menstrual products in restrooms at no charge to students.

Legal Aid represents thousands of Minnesotans with low incomes statewide in civil legal matters, and specifically here, we represent students who may not have access to menstrual products at home.

Our statewide surveys of parents accessing the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) have mentioned menstrual products as a top five affordability concern for parents and their youth. MFIP cash assistance benefits are extremely low and must be stretched to pay for several critical basic needs, including rent, utilities, and transportation. Parents and youth are prohibited from using federal SNAP benefits toward menstrual products, and these items are difficult to find at many food shelves that do stock other basic household supplies.

Legal Aid supports all efforts to ensure that youth have the support they need to take care of their menstrual health. A family's inability to afford menstrual products can cause extreme stress to the parents and youth in that household, and the public stigma around periods remains strong.

We thank Senator Cwodzinski for carrying this important legislation and we appreciate that the Senate is giving this issue of equity serious consideration.

Thank you for your time.

Jessica Webster, Staff Attorney
Legal Services Advocacy Project
jlwebster@mnlsap.org

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Larissa Gust, 121 3rd St N Delano MN, 55328

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Larissa Gust and I am a graduate of Delano High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Putting free period products in bathrooms will enable all menstruating students to feel comfortable and focus on school. I, and many of my friends, have experienced the embarrassment and discomfort that comes with not having a pad or tampon when you need it and it disrupts your day making learning difficult. All menstruators deserve to be able to have their basic needs met at school.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Kathleen Mahli, E-STEM Middle School (Saint Paul Public Schools)

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and Members of the Committees, my name is Kathleen Mahli and I am a licensed school nurse at E-STEM Middle School in St. Paul. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to briefly speak with you today about an important health issue that impacts half of our student population. This statement is in support of SF50 which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

As a middle school nurse, I assist several students daily that are unexpectedly in need of menstrual supplies. As you can imagine, this is a humiliating experience for my sixth to eighth grade students. In my office, I seek donations and also purchase menstrual supplies to attempt to supply the 300+ female students for when they are in need. The donations and my personal funds are limited and the sustainability is uncertain. Because of financial barriers, some students are unable to attend school due to lack of menstrual supplies. This is a very unfortunate and inequitable situation that leads to poor academic outcomes.

On the bright side, the menstrual inequity issue can be easily fixed. By providing free menstrual supplies in school restrooms across the state, humiliating situations will be avoided and absenteeism will be decreased. Menstrual supplies are a basic hygienic necessity and should be as readily available to students as toilet paper. It's time to move forward with an equitable plan for all students.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Education Policy Committees From:

Karishma Rebello

219 Tristan Dr, Excelsior MN 55331

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Karishma Rebello and I am a freshman at Minnetonka High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

The access to free menstrual products in school bathrooms is an important step to make sure that menstruating students are able to be completely present in school. By having access to period products, students will be able to feel comfortable in school. A few weeks ago, my cousin went to the bathroom and realized that she had gotten her period. She then had to return back to class to get a pad, but her teacher did not let her leave class again because she had just gone to the bathroom. My cousin then told him that she had gotten her period, and then he allowed her to leave. This could have all been avoided if she had access to free menstruating products in the bathroom.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Halimah Abdullah, 42 98th Ln NW Coon Rapids

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Halimah Abdullah and I am a student of Southwest High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

I believe this was about a couple of months ago when an incident happened relating to a lack of period products in my school. I was in the middle of class and I abruptly had the realization I had gotten my period. It made sense because I was cramping all morning. I immediately asked to use the restroom and as I was walking towards it, I was praying there would be a pad inside, put in there by the kindness of someone's heart because there are no school issued period products nor ones you can purchase. I of course found none in there and I painfully walked awkwardly to the nurses office across the hall to ask for a pad and the nurse told me, even if they had pads, which they didn't, I would need a special health pass to receive one. And I was nowhere near comfortable asking my male teacher for a pass to get one. I had asked about 5 different girls if they had a pad before I received one. My story isn't as nearly as embarrassing or demoralizing as some of my other friends and peers who have had worse incidents relating to lack of period products in the bathroom. If the chairs and committee were to decide to to put menstrual products in the school bathrooms, so many more students could have less of a negative experience having a period, and will allow menstruating students to not have the burden of worrying where they will get their next period product, so they can continue the rest of their day at school in comfort. Thank you.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Drew ScottRussell, 3220 Hopkins crossroad Minnetonka MN 55305

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and committee members, my name is Drew ScottRussell and I am a junior at Hopkins High School. I provide this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Period products in school restrooms are a necessity. Teens should not be financially responsible for themselves when their parents and school are unable to afford these products. If we are expected to learn at our best abilities then we should be provided with the materials that we need. All students should have the right to go to school without the interruption of blood in your pants.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Senate Education Policy Committees

From: Diane Kohen, Physical Education Teacher, Health Teacher, Adapted Physical Education Teacher, Coach - St. Louis Park Middle School

It is time. I am in my 39th year of teaching Health, Physical Education, Adapted Physical Education as well as coaching multiple sports. During this time I have seen the struggles of our families increase. At St. Louis Park Middle School, many of our female students have their period or get it for the first time. The situations we deal with are extremely diverse from communicating with family members, sometimes through an interpreter, teaching the physiological changes that are taking place through puberty, and reinforcing that there is no shame in what is happening to their body. To acknowledge that body changes are happening and provide a safe place to get menstrual products and assist individuals to embrace their body and learn how to live with their period is crucial to their self esteem and emotional well being. I am a strong supporter of the bill because I witness every day how my students may have to choose between food on the table or other items like menstrual products. Schools provide free and reduced breakfasts and lunches to those who qualify. It is past time to provide menstrual products to those in need so they can feel good about themselves and not worry what will happen to their clothes without the appropriate supplies. They can embrace who they are and come to school ready to learn without fear of being made fun of. Through NCJW we have received supplies to provide to the girls; free pads and/or tampons and it is very impactful to the girls to know they have a place to go to privately take care of their business. I see how thankful they are and how this allows them to stay in school and learn how to best deal with their changing bodies.

Addressing period poverty is long overdue and is essential to ensuring educational equity for our diverse populations, and for that matter, all our female students.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance Committee and the Senate Education Policy Committee

From: Danith Clausen
10300 Rachel Shores SW
Farwell MN 56327

Chair Cwodzinski, Chair Kunesh, and members of the committees,

My name is Danith Clausen. I am a retired Minnesota educator. For over three decades I worked in rural schools. I submit this statement in support of SF50, which would provide access to free menstrual products in Minnesota school bathrooms.

Minnesotans value education. We want all of our students to reach their full potential. The conversations I have with my son and my niece, both teachers, often come to a sadly familiar conclusion: You can't teacher a student who isn't there. A student should not be forced to stay home from school five days (or more) every four weeks because her family cannot afford to buy menstrual products for her, and she cannot afford them for herself. "Period poverty" disrupts a student's learning, piling up absences and negatively impacting her ability to succeed.

SF50 has the ability to reduce absenteeism for students in poverty by providing simple necessities that are no different from toilet paper or paper towels. This bill can make sure our students are "period secure," able to concentrate on their studies instead of worrying about their menstrual cycles. I ask that you support providing access to free menstrual products in school bathrooms.

Thank you for keeping the well-being of our students in mind while you do your important work.

To: Members of the Senate Education Finance and Education Policy Committees

From: Alma Lopez, 320 Lincoln Ave Gaylord MN, 55334

Dear Committee members,

My name is Alma Lopez and I am graduate of Arlington High School and Minnesota State University Mankato. I am writing to you for support of SF 50 which would give people who menstruate free access to necessary products in school bathrooms.

As a person who menstruates, I have experienced first-hand the discomfort of lack of accessible menstrual products. I can recall the moment of panic in middle school when a period came unexpectedly in the middle of class and I did not have the necessary products. From there on, my education became disrupted from embarrassment and discomfort. Having to rush to a bathroom only to find that I did not have the quarters with me to buy a pad or tampon from the menstrual product machines or at times there not even being a dispenser. The only resort being wads of toilet paper or having to ask around for someone to lend me a product. I have heard stories from others having to have a "tab" with the school nurse to receive a menstrual product. These stories are common occurrences within menstruators all of which could be prevented by having accessible and free products within schools. Menstrual products should not be treated as a luxury as they are essential needs. Furthermore, having menstrual products will allow students to better focus on their education and reduce the stigma that surrounds a normal bodily occurrence.

Period Equity Matters Because...

Periods happen whether or
not you can afford them!!

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

Period Equity Matters Because...

NO one should have to be
Stranded

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

Period Equity Matters Because...

When you enter a bathroom you expect toilet paper, something you need for a bodily function. So why shouldn't we expect the same for periods, something you need for a bodily function

- 6th grader

End Period Poverty

Period Equity Matters Because...

My daughter didn't have \$1 to purchase a pad from school nurse, leaving her embarrassed

End Period Poverty

Period Equity Matters Because...

Because I didn't
learn about
tampons until
College!

End Period Poverty 

Period Equity Matters Because...

it removes a
barrier to
success

End Period Poverty 

Period Equity Matters Because...

It keeps kids
in school and learning

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

Period Equity Matters Because...

It is a natural part
of life and students
should have basic
health supplies, no
matter the ~~is~~ financial
situation of their family.

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

How does Period Poverty Affect your Students?

I see students who don't have access to supplies and having products available at no cost could help their day and period feel more comfortable to be able to learn in school ♥

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

Period Equity Matters Because...

Students unable to afford or get to store for period products.

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

How does Period Poverty Affect your Students?

I work in two low income schools who do not provide children with pads, tampons, or deodorant. I would very much appreciate this support! Thank you - Jill Perkowski

End Period Poverty

Jill Perkowski
Registered Nurse

How does Period Poverty Affect your Students?

Not having period products keep a lot of students home.

End Period Poverty

How does Period Poverty Affect your
Students?

The cost of hygiene
products keeps
girls from attending
school

End Period Poverty

How does Period Poverty Affect your
Students?

Every girl should be
able to attend school
every day regardless
of their socio-economic situation

- Brenna Healy, Licensed
School Nurse

End Period Poverty

How does Period Poverty Affect your Students?

6th, 7th, & 8th grade girls come to the nurse's office daily for period supplies. Sometimes, they ask if they can take extra supplies for the evening & weekend.

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸

Period Equity Matters Because...

Students can't afford to buy
Get @ Health Office to
avoid stigma

End Period Poverty 🇺🇸