

House Education

02/29/2024 01:30 PM

HB24-1164 Free Menstrual Products to Students

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Amy Mushall For themselves	<p>I am writing in support of the bill which provides free menstrual products to students.</p> <p>Growing up, I remember friends who did not have access to feminine products because they didn't have the financial resources. Having access to free health products such as menstruation pads and tampons is similar to having low-cost and free lunches. The shame associated with lack of access can cause mental health strain and keep girls from being able to focus on their studies because they're worried about having access to prevent their clothes from being stained or being singled out and ridiculed by classmates.</p> <p>This is especially important in 6-8th grades, when girls may experience their first period and may not have access to the supplies that they need.</p> <p>Often, a period starts when you don't expect it. It can be incredibly embarrassing. Having access to supplies will help with mental health (alleviating the embarrassment or shame associated with having to ask someone for supplies) and general health by normalizing a woman's natural cycle.</p> <p>Thank you for presenting this bill. I ask you to vote to pass it!</p> <p>Respectfully, Amy Mushall</p>



February 2024

To: House Education Committee

Re: HB24-1164--Free Menstrual Products to Students

Dear Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. Over 700 community leaders are members in local AAUW branches around the state.

While we have made significant progress in many areas, AAUW remains committed to addressing issues that hold girls and women back from reaching their full potential. The Menstrual Hygiene Grant Program created by Senate Bill 21-255 has been providing grants to certain schools to provide free menstrual hygiene products to certain low-income students. The value of this program has been established, and now it is time to expand the grants to all menstruating students in all local schools.

While it may seem trivial to some, the availability of menstrual products at school can make a big difference for many young girls. The journey through puberty is not easy, and House Bill 1164 can make the journey a little less stressful.

For these reasons, AAUW of Colorado strongly supports this bill and requests your YES vote in committee and throughout the process of becoming law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden".

Su Ryden
AAUW of Colorado Public Policy Co-Director

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American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

PERIOD.

Feb 28, 2024

Testimony in support of Colorado House Bill 24-1164 - FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO STUDENTS

Dear Committee Members,

PERIOD. is writing to testify in strong support of HB24-1164, which would require local education providers to provide free menstrual products in at least half of applicable school buildings in bathrooms that are accessible to students enrolled in sixth through twelfth grade who menstruate, except for a small rural school district and a local education provider with only one applicable school building.

This bill takes practical and essential steps to address period poverty for students in Colorado who menstruate while in school without access to the adequate devices to manage their periods.

- According to a 2023 State of the Period study, nearly 1 in 4 students in the US cannot afford menstrual products
- Increasing access to menstrual products in schools reduces health risks, alleviates the burden of period poverty, and protects the dignity of students who menstruate.
- Menstrual products are a basic necessity like toilet paper and hand soap.

Establishing wider access to menstrual products in Colorado schools would ensure students continue to have the supplies and devices they need to manage their periods while in school, reducing barriers, and increasing access to inclusion and education for students who may otherwise need to leave school because of a lack of access to period products, stained clothes, or shame.

As a global youth-fueled nonprofit that strives to eradicate period poverty and stigma through service, education, and advocacy, PERIOD. is proud to support HB24-1164. Our strong network of PERIOD. Chapters in Colorado, along with the 200+ volunteer PERIOD. Chapters around the United States, support and applaud this bill.

We strongly urge all members of this committee to increase access to menstrual products in schools and unanimously support HB24-1164.

Thank you,



Michela Bedard
Executive Director
[PERIOD.](#)



Damaris Pereda
National Programs Director
[PERIOD.](#)

Thank you chair and members of the committee. My name is Lauren Smith and I am the Black Civic Engagement and Policy Manager for Soul 2 Soul Sisters and Elephant Circle. I'm testifying on behalf of both organizations in support of HB24-1164.

Soul 2 Soul Sisters and Elephant Circle are reproductive justice organizations, focused on supporting the health and well-being of families, especially Black and brown parents and children.

An important part of reproductive justice is addressing period poverty. Period poverty is an issue that disproportionately impacts Black menstruating people - in 2022 it was found that 55% of Black people who are currently menstruating struggle with period poverty, compared to an average 47%. Additionally, more than 23% of people experiencing homelessness in Colorado are Black - and we know for these communities, accessing period products can be particularly challenging. Colorado needs more places where families experiencing poverty or homelessness are able to access their basic needs.

Placing period products in schools across Colorado is an important step in addressing this need. For Black teens in schools, lack of access to period products can lead to shame, poor hygiene, and disruption from learning. In Colorado, 51% of all female teens in Colorado struggle to access or afford period products. No child should have to experience this. Period products are a basic necessity and everyone needs to be able to access what they need for free. Access to period products is a reproductive justice issue and we need to do more to support our students across the state. Please vote yes on HB1164, thank you.