



*An Initiative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth*

Dear Representative Feist and Senator Cwodziński,

Thank you for sharing, presenting, and testifying on behalf of House File 2750 requiring access to menstrual products in schools across Minnesota at the Minnesota Youth Council Committee hearing on March 27, 2022 and thank you for working to provide greater access to menstrual products and to fight against period poverty.

We believe that this bill is a stepping stone to increasing attendance and dignity for students across our state. According to the Alliance for Period Supplies, within the United States, 1 in 4 students have missed school due to a lack of access to menstrual products. For the roughly half of students that menstruate in our school districts, access to free and easily accessible products is essential to promoting attendance and access to education that are often under threat when not available. The current patchwork of supplies provided by schools is often marked by fees that prevent equitable access and, without this bill, is likely to continue to mark a dividing line between students who can and cannot afford them.

We believe that this bill will help to turn the tide within our state, however, we hold reservations about the enactment and inclusion of students through the current funding mechanisms. Within the current funding formula, all schools are given the same funding considerations based on the number of students they serve without consideration of schools with higher proportions of low-income students. Without accounting for the proportion of low-income students, the threat of a lack of access in schools with a higher need for menstrual products remains.

In addition, we also regard the minimum of 1,000 students for the statute to apply as a barrier to access for students in smaller schools across the state. Members on the council who attend schools smaller than 1,000 students testify that it is needed just as much in their school as it is in others. This is particularly important with the inclusion of elementary and middle schools that serve students from 4th-8th grade which often fall under the 1,000 student enrollment number. Adjusting the bill to include schools with lower student enrollment by either including the same requirements or adjusting the funding formula accordingly is essential to addressing the needs of students across the state.

Thank you for your time and investment in this issue. We look forward to future collaboration and would be happy to answer any additional questions.

Sincerely,  
Minnesota Youth Council