

‘O kēia ‘ōlelo hō’ike no ke
Komikina Kūlana Olakino o Nā Wāhine

Testimony on behalf of the
**Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of
Women**

Support for S.B. 2821 SD2

Submitted March 31, 2022
Hearing on 3:00 p.m. on Friday, April 1
Room 308

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women strongly supports SB2821 SD2, which would provide free menstrual products to all Hawai‘i public and charter school campuses. Unlike one year ago, we now have specific data published in the first State of Hawai‘i report on period poverty in partnership with Ma‘i Movement. *Understanding Period Poverty in Hawai‘i* (November 2021) found a concerning lack of material and social support for menstruation, which is resulting in interrupted education for girls and gender non-conforming students.¹ Forty-two percent of 361 survey respondents across the state reported missing or leaving school due to lack of period supplies. Nearly half of respondents did not receive information about menstruation prior to their first period. Sadder still, Ma‘i Movement found that Hawai‘i girls are resorting to socks, baby diapers and even leaves in lieu of period products.

Broadly, period poverty is likely to affect Hawai‘i students because more than half of the state’s public school students come from low income families.² If students cannot pay for basic supplies needed to cope with an involuntary bodily function like menstruation, who should? Ninety-four percent of 361 respondents surveyed in *Understanding Period Poverty in Hawai‘i* believe that government should supply free period products.

¹ <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/11.17.21-Understanding-Period-Poverty-in-Hawai%CA%BBi-Report.pdf>

² <https://www.civilbeat.org/2015/01/more-than-half-of-hawaii-public-school-students-are-low-income/#:~:text=More%20Than%20Half%20of%20Hawaii%20Public%20School%20Students%20Are%20Low%2DIncome,-Reading%20time%3A%202&text=About%2051%20percent%20of%20the,by%20the%20Southern%20Education%20Foundation.>

A small investment in this bill would undo generations of social exclusion, shame and stigma associated with period poverty. Accordingly, the Commission asks that the Committee pass SB2821 SD2 in order to achieve equal status for girls and gender diverse students in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Khara Jabola-Carolus, Executive Director



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 04/01/2022

Time: 03:00 PM

Location: 308 Via Videoconference

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Interim Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 2821, SD2 RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses. Requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses. Appropriates moneys. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports SB 2821, SD2. This bill would require the Department to provide free menstrual products to students on all public school campuses.

Menstrual products may be difficult for some students to afford or access when they are in need and having these materials available to students for free at school could potentially help them to stay in class and engage in instructional activities. However, passage of this bill would have a financial impact on the Department.

Approximately 45,800 students identified as female are currently enrolled in grades 5-12 in the Department's schools. If each of these individuals uses three products per day for five days every month and the school year consists of 10 months, it is estimated that each person would utilize 150 products per school year. One menstrual pad costs approximately \$0.14. The total cost for menstrual products each year is estimated to be \$1,000,000.00. The Department would opt to not provide tampons because there is a risk for liability in the potential for the user to not follow all labeled directions in the package and the increased risk for infection such as toxic shock syndrome.

The Department appreciates this proposal and the inclusion of funding but asks that any additional funding not affect the Department's top budget priorities to restore funds that were

reduced as a result of the fiscal fallout from COVID-19 and the funding of existing budget shortfalls that were included in the Department's supplemental budget request. Without those funds, the Department will face severe constraints on its ability to continue to promote equity and access to needed resources and support for all students.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN M.D.
LT. GOVERNOR



ISAAC W. CHOY
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Isaac W. Choy, Director
Department of Taxation

Date: Friday, April 1, 2022
Time: 3:00 P.M.
Place: Via Video Conference, State Capitol

Re: S.B. 2821, S.D. 2, Relating to Feminine Hygiene Products

The Department of Taxation (Department) supports S.B. 2821, S.D. 2, and offers the following comments.

S.B. 2821, S.D. 2, adds a new section to chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), requiring the Department of Education and state public charter school commission to provide menstrual products, free of charge, to all students on all public school campuses.

The Department supports this measure as a viable alternative to other measures that seek to achieve similar outcomes through general excise tax (GET) exemptions for menstrual products. This measure more effectively achieves the intended benefit of helping young women attend school without concern for lack of feminine hygiene products, which is not achieved through the previously mentioned GET exemption measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2821, S.D. 2

April 1, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2821, S.D. 2, adds a new section to Chapters 302A and 302D, HRS, to require the Department of Education (DOE) and State Public Charter School Commission (Commission) to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses and public charter school campuses. The measure also appropriates an unspecified sum of general funds in FY 23 to DOE and the Commission for this purpose.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

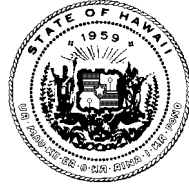
Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 29, 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2821 SD2– RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.**

Hearing: April 1, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this measure and defers to the Department of Education (DOE) and the State Public Charter School Commission as to implementation and needed resources. The Department requests the appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to require the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses. Requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses. Appropriates moneys. Effective 7/1/2050.
(SD2)

The SD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Adding a purpose section; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

The Committee report noted that the appropriation required for this measure is \$1,000,000.

The SD2 amended the measure by:

- (1) Including clarifying information regarding Mai Movement Hawaii's Hoohanohano Initiative;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion on the measure; and
- (3) Making technical nonsubstantive changes for purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

DHS recognizes the barriers that individuals face when attempting to access or purchase menstrual products. Often, these barriers prevent vulnerable youth from furthering education and inhibit healthy social interactions. Creating ease of access and free menstrual products for youth has the potential to increase their confidence, educational success, and improve their health and well-being outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



JOHN S.S. KIM
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION
(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Tel: (808) 586-3775 Fax: (808) 586-3776

FOR: SB 2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality
DATE: April 1, 2022 at 3:00 PM
COMMITTEE: Committee on Finance
ROOM: Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
FROM: Yvonne Lau, Interim Executive Director
State Public Charter School Commission

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 2821 SD2**. This measure requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses. Requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses. Appropriates moneys

The Commission deeply appreciates the support and attention of these House committees and the Senate in ensuring that public charter schools are included in the effort to address menstrual equalities for public school students

The Commission looks forward to working with the Department of Education, and any other state agency associated with procuring and providing these items to ensure the most cost-effective method for our schools to meet this need.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 2:44:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Golojuch Jr	Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i (formerly the LGBT Caucus) Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization and we fully support SB 2821 SD 2.

We hope you all will support this important piece of legislation.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, April 1, 2022

3:00 PM

Conference Room 308 and Via Videoconference

in consideration of

SB 2821, SD2**RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.**

Chair LUKE, Vice Chair YAMASHITA, and Members of the House Finance Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments in support of SB 2821, SD2, which (1) requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses, (2) requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses, and (3) makes an appropriation.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening our representative democracy - one that works for everyone.

Common Cause Hawaii understands that gender and racial equality is a crucial feature of successful democratic societies and effective democratic governments. The lack of adequate access to feminine hygiene products is a form of gender-based exclusion. Menstrual equity is also an issue for marginalized populations, given the costs associated with hygiene products. Our public schools should support women, especially the marginalized, in our system, strengthening democracy for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of SB 2821, SD2. If you have questions of me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 3:08:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports SB2821. Please pass this bill. Thank you.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member



Hawai'i
Children's Action Network Speaks!
Building a unified voice for Hawai'i's children

To: Representative Luke, Chair
Representative Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: **SB 2821 SD2, Relating to menstrual equity**
3:00 PM, April 1, 2022

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to **testify in support of Senate Bill 2821 SD2, relating to menstrual equity.**

As a community, we respond to the basic needs of students. We provide free meals and we have partnerships with community health organizations for dental and vision screenings. It is time we included meeting students' menstrual needs as well. With periods beginning as young as 10, students could face these challenges for the majority of their education.¹ A recent study looked at the impact of period poverty or menstrual inequity has on students in Hawai'i.² Those surveyed reported:

- Missing school and work because they did not have access to period products;
- Feeling social and emotional distress when they don't have the products they need; and
- Almost a quarter of respondents had to prioritize other essential household expenses, like food, over buying period products.

This is an equity issue within our public health and education systems. The lack of access and means has greater consequences for girls and women and girls and women in low-income families. Providing free menstrual products to all students helps reduce the barrier to accessing the education we all value.

For these reasons, HCAN Speaks! respectfully requests the Committee to support this measure.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy

¹ American Academy of Pediatrics, Physical Development in Girls: What to Expect During Puberty, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty/Pages/Physical-Development-Girls-What-to-Expect.aspx>

² Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, 2020, *Understanding period poverty in Hawai'i*, <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/11.17.21-Understanding-Period-Poverty-in-Hawai%CA%BBi-Report.pdf>



To: House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date/Time: April 1, 2022 3PM
Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB2821 SD2

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and the Members of Committee,

Members of AAUW of Hawaii thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB2821 SD2 which would require the DOE and charter schools to provide hygiene products free of charge to all students. This is an important matter of public health but also of equal access to education.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is an all volunteer, statewide chapter of a national organization and is made up of six branches: Hilo, Honolulu, Kaua'i, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu. UH Hilo, UH Manoa, UH Maui College, and Windward Community College are also AAUW partners. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for equal opportunities in education, at workplace and for economic security, and in leadership.

Sincerely,
Younghee Overly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Y. Overly", is positioned below the typed name.

Public Policy Committee, AAUW of Hawaii
publicpolicy-hi@aauw.net



Tuesday, March 29, 2022

SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality
Testifying in Strong Support

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **strongly supports SB2821 SD2, Relating to Menstrual Equality**. All students, no matter their gender, must have equal opportunity to learn. Not having access to menstrual products has shown to inhibit a student's ability to be in the classroom. **SB2821** would ensure that all students on public school campuses and public charter school campuses have menstrual products available free of charge.

We would never not stock toilet paper in a school bathroom or band aids at the nurse's office. Having easy and free access to basic hygiene supplies like menstrual products is essential for these students to be able to continue learning without a monthly interruption from something they cannot control. A 2021 study found that at least 1 in 5 teens has experienced period poverty, a lack of access to sanitary products.

Not providing a product that is a medical necessity for these students is archaic and wrong.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to **fully fund SB2821 SD2 and pass the measure out with a clean effective date** so that we can start supporting all students in their learning journey.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Gary Hooser
Executive Director
Pono Hawai'i Initiative

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:11:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Kuenzi	Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates - Hawai'i supports SB 2821.

HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: info@hysn.org

Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui

Get Ready Hawai'i

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest and

Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community

Center

The Catalyst Group

March 29, 2022

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair,
And members of the Committee on Finance

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2821 SD 2 RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY

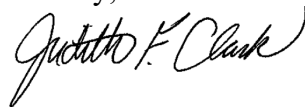
Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 2821 SD 2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.

Feminine hygiene products are a basic necessity for adolescent girls. For low income students, the cost of feminine hygiene products is a burden. 1 in 5 teens have struggled to afford period products. 84% of teens have either missed or know someone who has missed school due to lack of feminine hygiene products.. In St. Louis, Missouri, 46% of low-income women had to choose between a meal and period products. (freetheperiod.org).

When feminine hygiene supplies are not accessible to students, there are educational, health, and social impacts. Using a pad or tampon for a lengthy period of time can result in strong, unpleasant odors and bleeding through one's clothing. Students may choose to be truant from school to avoid the embarrassment, and the taunts and bullying from their peers. Stale menstrual blood may increase risk of vaginal and urinary track infections.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH
Executive Director

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:41:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Peters	Ho`ola Lahui Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure is strongly supported by our organization in order to ensure that period products are readily available to those in need at our public schools. Please support this important measure.



david.miyashiro@hawaiikidscan.org
hawaiikidscan.org

David Miyashiro
Executive Director

April 1, 2022

Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

HawaiiKidsCAN supports SB2821 SD2, which requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses; requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses; and appropriates moneys.

Founded in 2017, HawaiiKidsCAN is a local nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that Hawaii has an excellent and equitable education system that reflects the true voices of our communities and, in turn, has a transformational impact on our children and our state. We strongly believe that all students should have access to excellent educational opportunities, regardless of family income levels and circumstances.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been incredibly disruptive to student learning, and schools have a heavy task to address student learning loss, social emotional and mental health challenges, and re-socialization for kids who have experienced trauma and been disconnected from their friends and teachers. To this end, schools must be safe and supportive learning environments for all kids.

Unfortunately, school is far from comfortable for many students who menstruate, as financial challenges often prevent students from having access to basic hygiene supplies. In fact, local research has shown that 8 out of 10 students in Hawaii have faced difficulties getting period products when they need them. Without these supplies, students may skip school or use unhealthy workarounds.

It is the DOE's responsibility to ensure all students are put in the best position to succeed, which is why many students rely on school as the source of nutritious meals.

Similarly, we shouldn't penalize our menstruating students for financial circumstances outside of their control. All students deserve a chance to succeed and reach their potential.

Mahalo for your consideration,

David Miyashiro
Founding Executive Director
HawaiiKidsCAN

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:34:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Tochiki	Hawaii State Teachers Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Legislators,

My name is Sarah Tochiki and I am a teacher at Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School. I am testifying in support of SB2821 because it is important that there are no barriers for our students to be able to access their education. While something like menstrual products may seem insignificant to those who can afford them, for those who struggle financially, this is a major obstacle to coming to school. We must make sure we support the needs of our students. This will help them to make sure they are ready to concentrate on learning. We cannot teach students if they are stressed about non-school related things. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sarah Tochiki



Papa Ola Lokahi
Nana I Ka Pono Na Ma

Papa Ola Lōkahi

894 Queen Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: 808.597.6550 ~ Facsimile: 808.597.6551

House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice-Chair

Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00 PM, CR 308 & Videoconference

RE: SB 2821 SD 2 – Relating to Menstrual Equity
Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committees on Finance,

Papa Ola Lōkahi **supports** SB 2821 SD 2, which takes action to end “period poverty” – the systematic lack of access to menstrual supplies, such as pads and tampons – by providing funding so that free menstrual products are available in all public and charter schools.

29.5% of those who responded to the “Understanding Period Poverty in Hawai‘i” survey identified as Native Hawaiian, which may indicate that Native Hawaiians face disproportionate impacts of period poverty. The components in this measure would allow the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission to address period poverty as a vehicle to increase educational and gender equity and ultimately contribute to public health. The scope of these efforts would also ensure students in rural communities, who may have fewer options to access menstrual products regardless of cost barriers, have an additional resource.

Papa Ola Lōkahi supports efforts that provide access to necessary health resources, allowing students to participate in school and society fully. Ensuring students have access to menstrual products free of charge may also help alleviate stress and shame, which lack of access to these products may cause, and increase overall health and well-being. SB 2821 SD 2 is one of multiple vehicles in this Legislature that works to increase access to health resources, which is a part of health equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this critical legislation.

Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, authorized by the federal Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act, is charged with raising the health status of Native Hawaiians to the highest possible level, which we achieve through strategic partnerships, programs, and public policy.

Papa Ola Lokahi

is the Native Hawaiian Health Board established in 1988 to improve the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians.

Board of Directors

Member Organizations

Ho‘ola Lāhui Hawai‘i

Hui No Ke Ola Pono

Hui Mālama Ola Nā ‘Ōiwi

ALU LIKE

Ke Ola Mamo

E Ola Mau

University of Hawai‘i

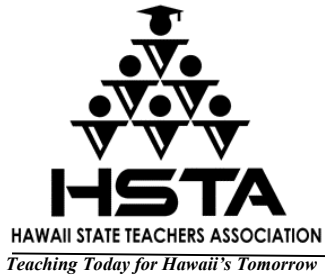
Hawai‘i State Department of Health

Nā Pu‘uwai

Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Executive Director

Sheri-Ann Daniels, EdD



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
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Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

RE: SB2821, SD2– RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2022

OSA TUI, JR., PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support SB2821, SD2**, relating to menstrual equality. This bill requires the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses and makes unspecified appropriations.

In 2019 New Hampshire's legislature passed legislation, that Governor Chris Sununu signed into law, to provide feminine hygiene products in their secondary public school bathrooms. **We must also move towards providing free feminine hygiene products in secondary school bathrooms.** Again, many states are moving in this direction or have already implemented such legislation.

By providing these products for our middle and high school students we will promote gender equity in our schools as well as ensure that girls from lower income homes do not miss out on their education simply because their families can't afford to buy these products. Additionally, making these products accessible in bathrooms will help prevent the embarrassment girls face of having to try to hide their sanitary pads or tampons to avoid the attention of male classmates while heading to the restroom or the struggle of trying to find a feminine hygiene product from a classmate or teacher when their period comes unexpectedly.

To increase gender equity in our state and schools and to ensure access to feminine hygiene products regardless a student's financial situation, the Hawaii State Teachers Association urges you to **support** this bill.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair

Friday, April 1, 2022

3:00 PM

SB 2821 SD2 – STRONG SUPPORT FOR MENSTRUAL EQUITY

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Yamashita and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai`i for more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the more than 3,993 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars or under the “care and custody” of the Department of Public Safety or the corporate vendor on any given day. We are always mindful that 1,110 of Hawai`i’s imprisoned people are serving their sentences abroad thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands. Many of our incarcerated people are parents, so this bill is important for the health of their children.

Community Alliance on Prisons is grateful for this opportunity to share our support for this public health measure. SB 2821 SD2 requires the DOE to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses. Requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses. Appropriates moneys. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

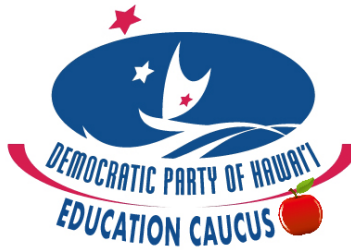
The availability of these products is an important step in the direction of public health. We hope that it is coupled with education about hygiene and public health for both girls and boys.

CAP is proud to support the Ma`i Movement and hope that one day these public health products are widely available to all those that need them, especially those in jails, prisons, and detention centers. The availability of these public health products sends a strong message that the state is in support of public health.

One thing that COVID has taught us is the importance of everyone’s health for the safety of entire communities.

Please pass this measure and appropriate adequate funding for this important bill.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our support for this public health measure!



SENATE BILL 2821, SD 2, RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUITY

APRIL 1, 2022 · HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE ·
CHAIR REP. SYLVIA LUKE

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus **supports** SB 2821, SD 2, relating to menstrual equity, which requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses and requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses.

A national study conducted by the University of Richmond found that **students who are unable to afford menstrual products are six times more likely to be absent or late to school, and four times more likely to leave school early.** If we want to increase achievement and decrease chronic absenteeism, then we need to make menstrual products free and readily available in all schools. Moreover, young women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are often forced to use unhealthy alternatives to quality menstrual products when their families are unable to afford such products, which can lead to serious health conditions, including toxic shock syndrome. Ensuring access to free menstrual products in spaces frequented by young women, including public schools, is a matter of gender justice, healthcare equity, and human rights.

Kris Coffield · Chairperson, DPH Education Caucus · (808) 679-7454 · kriscoffield@gmail.com



March 30, 2022

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: S.B. 2821, S.D. 2, RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.

Hearing: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00 p.m., via videoconference

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Hawaii Women Lawyers (“HWL”) **supports S.B. 2821, S.D. 2**, which requires the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission to provide hygiene products that support public health, such as toilet paper, menstrual products, and hand soap free of charge to all students on all public school campuses; and makes appropriations.

The mission of Hawaii Women Lawyers is to improve the lives and careers of women in all aspects of the legal profession, influence the future of the legal profession, and enhance the status of women and promote equal opportunities for all.

Menstruation is a natural and inescapable experience for women and girls. However, this normal bodily function can create numerous challenges, raising not only health and hygiene issues, but also social and human rights issues, especially for those who lack access to adequate menstrual products. Students may be forced to use items that are not sufficient, safe or sanitary to manage their menstrual hygiene or they may make the decision not to attend school at all when they are unable to access supplies.

Providing menstrual products in Hawaii schools ensures that students have access to critical health and hygiene resources that will allow them to have equal access to education regardless of their gender or economic status.

S.B. 2821, S.D. 2 recognizes the importance of access to basic needs and its impact on gender and education equity; and HWL supports this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
House Committee on Finance
Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke
Honorable Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita
Committee Members

Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00 pm

RE: **Support for SB2821** - Requires the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products for free to all students on all campuses

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i **strongly supports SB2821** requiring the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission to make menstrual products for free to all students on all campuses, and also makes appropriations. Furthermore, we fully support the Senate Committee on Education's recommendation as noted in their committee report which makes an appropriation of \$1,000,000 required for this measure. We urge you to make the effective date July 1, 2022 in order to have products in schools by the start of the 2022-23 academic school year. Ma'i Movement Hawai'i is a locally grown organization committed to addressing menstrual inequity and ending period poverty, or the inability to buy and access menstrual products, due to factors including but not limited to financial constraints, lack of education, societal shame or stigma, and inadequate access to a clean facilities to maintain proper hygiene.

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i recognizes the all-encompassing societal challenges inherent in tackling the broader issue of period poverty that disproportionately affects students, low-income and houseless girls and women, trans and gender non-conforming individuals, and those that are incarcerated. We are particularly concerned with [statewide statistics from the DOE](#) that found 47% of students in the DOE system were deemed "economically disadvantaged" in 2019. The [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) also revealed the extent of period poverty and menstrual inequity in the state with nearly 30% of respondents reporting that they or someone in their household experienced difficulty obtaining period products, of which cost was the most cited reason.

During the resolution hearings in the 2021 session, it was apparent there were still many unanswered questions about the need, cost, implementation, and potential impact of providing period products free to all students. As a result, we are conducting a statewide pilot, [The Ho'ohanohano Initiative](#), in six schools on O'ahu, Hawai'i island, Maui, and Kaua'i in the 2021-22 academic school year. There are public, charter, Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools, ranging from elementary through high school in urban and rural communities. The pilot program aims to increase student access to period products, including but not limited to pads and/or tampons, by distributing them free of charge throughout each campus. During the pilot, we regularly met with administrators, reviewed product utilization, and assessed the impact of free period products on student attendance, performance, and well-being.

The pilot serves approximately 2,353 students and distributed 41,280 period products since the start of the 2021-22 school year in August 2021 at DreamHouse ‘Ewa Beach, Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School, Samuel Enoka Kalama Intermediate School, Ka’ū High & Pāhala Elementary School, Princess Ke’elikōlani Middle School, and Farrington High School. The average use is 25 products per student and average cost is \$4-5 per student between August and December 2021. In the midyear assessment, 40% of students reported using the products provided. Although the pilot is still ongoing, we found that product usage was impacted by a number of factors, including but not limited to the percentage of students that qualified for free and reduced lunches, estimated number of students in unstable housing, product access and availability to students, and COVID-related absences. For example, Ka’ū High & Pāhala Elementary School, which had the highest average product use and cost per student, is the most geographically isolated school in the pilot with 100% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, and a high number of students in unstable housing. Furthermore, the schools with the highest and lowest average product use per student to date had approximately the same total cost (approximately \$2,000 midyear), but differed in the number of students enrolled, population demographics, and demonstrated need.

Students were encouraged to freely take the number of products they needed at school. There were no reported incidents of excessive use. We are also aware that the cost of menstrual products is not the only barrier or problematic issue facing many individuals who menstruate face every month. A variety of factors contribute to the pain, unnecessary shame, and difficult experiences many are forced to confront when their period arrives. Some individuals who struggle during their period deal with the reality of limited resources, no home, and abusive relationships. Our transgender and nonbinary community also experience trouble, exacerbated feelings of shame, and other nonbinary-related barriers when accessing menstrual products. Therefore, like meal distributions during school breaks, we sought to supply products at school and home by implementing Take Home Kits, which contained an estimated number of period products needed based on the length of the school break.

The procurement and delivery of period products, such as pads and tampons, was carried out by Ma’i Movement Hawai’i through centralized purchasing with a single vendor for cost efficiency. There was no restriction on purchasing period products, such as pads or tampons, but we met with each school to discuss the quantity needed of each product type and monitored or adjusted the amount ordered based on subsequent use. All schools ordered both pads and tampons, and we noticed tampon requests increased in relation to grade levels. On average, schools requested an allocation of 50% pads and 50% tampons of total quantity at high schools compared to 70% pads and 30% tampons at intermediate and middle school level, and 80% pads and 20% tampons at elementary schools.

We **strongly support** leaving the language of SB2821 permissive to allow schools to purchase the period products their students need. In response to liability and health concerns around tampons, according to a 2020 study [“Device-Associated Menstrual Toxic Shock Syndrome”](#), toxic shock syndrome (TSS) was classically associated with high absorbency tampon use in the 1980s. However, there are multiple forms of TSS, many of which have no connection to menstruation or tampon use and occur in both males and females. In the last 40 years, the incidence of tampon-induced TSS has declined now that changes were made to tampon absorbency, composition, public health education and labeling regulations. The current incidence of menstrual TSS is 0.5 to 1.0 per 100,00 population.

Since period product distribution was no longer cost prohibitive for schools, we encouraged increased access and availability to students in multiple locations throughout their respective campuses. As a result, schools placed period products in locations such as bathrooms, individual stalls, health room, classrooms, main office, counselors' offices, athletic department, and teen center (if applicable), with all schools placing period products in multiple places. Some schools reported a few incidents of product misuse in the bathrooms at the start of the pilot. However, they were able to effectively and quickly mitigate the situation through educating the students and working with the custodial and facilities teams. Since then, there have been no reported incidents or misuse. In fact, faculty are reporting the opposite: *“Allowing menstruating students to care for themselves without shame or stigma during the school day is absolutely important. I can see that reflection in how these students have felt more empowered and confident in the classroom.”* (Middle Charter School, O'ahu)

By allowing students to get free products in multiple locations on campus, the pilot decreased barriers to access and the practice of using unsafe and potentially harmful alternatives, like leaves, folder paper, and socks, reported at the beginning of the school year. This is unacceptable and we should not tolerate these conditions and environments that could be easily changed. Faculty and students also agreed that embarrassment was the biggest barrier to getting period products, followed by cost and education. The midyear assessment revealed an improvement of 17% - with only 16% of students reporting embarrassment as a barrier compared with 33% at the beginning of the year. Only 27% of students reported they weren't able to get a period product when they needed them at school and the number of faculty that reported witnessing students experiencing difficulties accessing period products dropped from 56% to 1%. One O'ahu high school student commented that *“It was very helpful to have quick access to period products because there were some days where I would unexpectedly get my period and it made me feel more reassured knowing I could go to the health room or teachers classrooms to get the products I need.”* An intermediate faculty member on Kaua'i also commented on the impact of the program on non-menstruating students, citing that *“Boys seem to be less sensitized to the occurrence.”* The program not only addresses menstrual equity directly related to financial constraints, but also speaks to the broader issue of basic needs for menstruating students and breaks down stigma and systemic barriers.

Absenteeism is one of the most powerful predictors of student success or failure. Chronic absenteeism, or missing 15+ days, is a key priority for Hawai'i public schools. While few students were chronically absent because of their periods, the pilot establishes a clear link between access to period products, absenteeism and education loss. After only one semester of the pilot, students reported missing fewer classes (7% improvement) and fewer school days (9% improvement) with access to period products. At the start of the pilot, one out of four faculty reported students missed at least one school day and one out of two reported they missed class or left school on the pretest survey. Now, 37% reported that having period products helped students to reduce missed classes or absences. As expressed by a Maui Middle School teacher, *“This gives girls the chance to keep coming to school, if these products are available. They don't end up in the health room and can continue coming to class.”* Additionally, 29% of faculty observed that providing period products had a positive impact on students' social and emotional well-being.

The data collection shows that needs varied from school to school. From our initial December 2021 report, we estimated an annual cost of \$4-5 per student based on product use at that point in time. While we continue to assess continued costs, based on patterns in ordering and use, we forecast an estimate of \$5-8 per

student annually. We will continue to work with the department on finalizing costs as we review product utilization for the duration of the pilot.

We envision distribution to schools by the department to be similar with other mass distribution of products, like PPE or toilet paper and soap, with opportunities for schools to purchase additional products as needed. We modeled our purchasing in the same manner with an initial bulk purchase intended to last the school for two months and ordering on a need basis. With that being said, implementation at each school is critical to the impact of free period products on students. There is currently no clear policy for the provision of period products. Some of our pilot schools and others that we work with reported that period products were allocated in their school budget, but often, many faculty and staff purchased out of their own pocket or through community donations. Consequently, there was also an inconsistent practice of charging students or limiting access. In the best-case scenario, there was no fee levied, but in some cases students paid anywhere from \$0.25-\$1.00 per product. This is not a nominal fee, especially when taking into consideration the number of students that qualify for free and reduced lunch in our schools. Our state policies and budgets must reflect our state priorities and if left to ambiguity, inconsistent practices such as those aforementioned will happen and our students will continue to be negatively impacted. It is not enough to make appropriations for the purchase of period products.

The bill requires the Department of Education and State Public School Charter Commission to make period products free to all students on their respective campuses to ensure that the safety and health of our students remain a priority. Upon completion of the pilot, we will issue a final report on purchasing and implementation guidelines based on learnings from the schools to serve as a model for other schools. The bill also includes all schools because [a 2021 report by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) found that 26.1% of 361 respondents began menstruating in elementary school.

SB2821 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty in Hawai'i and promotes common goals requiring low investment in public health, basic equity, education equity, and gender equality. We urge you to support **SB2821** to help improve the lives of public and charter school students in Hawai'i. We welcome you to contact us with any additional questions you may have.

Mahalo for your leadership and service to Hawai'i!

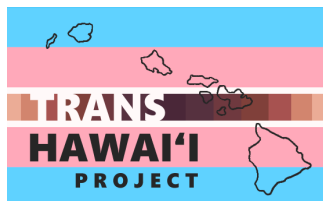
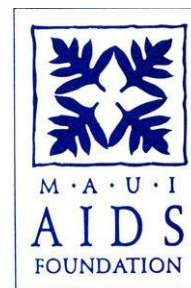
Aloha,

Nikki-Ann Yee, Brandy-Lee Yee, and Jamie-Lee Kapana
Ma'i Movement Hawai'i

ORGANIZATION SUPPORT

Parents And Children Together
 ACLU of Hawai'i
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists,
 Hawai'i Section
 AAUW of Hawai'i
 Hawaii State Teachers Association
 Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates
 YWCA O'ahu
 Hale Kipa
 Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center
 Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii
 Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services
 Community Alliance on Prisons
 AF3IRM Hawai'i
 Breastfeeding Hawaii
 Going Home Hawaii
 Trillium Birthing Services
 Keiki Kaukau
 Zen Den Midwifery

Hawaii Foodbank
 Ho'ola Lahui Hawaii
 Boys & Girls Clubs of Maui
 Hawai'i Arts Alliance
 Women Helping Women
 Pua Mohala Healing & Advocacy Services
 The Pantry by Feeding Hawaii Together
 Bay Clinic, Inc.
 Trans Hawai'i Project
 Princess Ke'elikolani Middle School
 Nest for Families
 Malama I Ke Ola Health Center
 UHM Women's Center
 Maui AIDS Foundation
 HHSC Kauai Region
 Lanai Community Health Center
 Days for Girls International
 The Pad Project
 Alliance for Period Supplies
 The Hanawai Sisterhood



CONSTITUENT SUPPORT

As of this submission, over 300 individuals signed our petition from all Senate Districts and 48 House Districts. Every single person left their own personal testimony, but it was too many to include here. If you would like to read them and hear what your constituents have to say, please head to maimovement.org/talk-story. Here are just a few of the comments provided:

Basic necessities for students don't come easy especially in our district. Many families are financially struggling to this day! Poor experience in the educational system I've seen the struggle. I support this bill to help alleviate the unnecessary stresses and mental wellness for young women today. - Ka'ea , District 5 - Naalehu, Ocean View, Capt. Cook, Kealakekua, Kailua-Kona

We have a lot of low income families that struggle to put food on the table. Period products are expensive and should be available to students who might need them in school. - Angela , District 40 - Ewa, Ewa Beach, Ewa By Gentry, Iroquois Point

The United Nations maintains that menstruation is not a girls' or women's issue -- it is a human rights issue. Similarly, the State of Hawaii supports the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and depriving our keiki from accessing menstrual products at public schools would go against our stated commitments to health and well-being (SDG 3), inclusive education (SDG 4), and gender equality and empowerment (SDG 5). As a local planner and advocate for quantitative measures of well-being, I stand behind providing free period products in public schools. - Kendrick , District 40 - Ewa, Ewa Beach, Ewa By Gentry, Iroquois Point

I work as a health provider in high school. I have students who struggle with getting food, they have multiple generations of family members in what is designed as a one family home and feminine hygiene is low on the list for their families. They come to the clinic to get products regularly. Anything we can do to help these young ladies who have so many other obstacles in their lives can help them tremendously. - Michelle , District 36 - Mililani Mauka, Mililani

Women need free supplies because mainly, we don't have have an option to "opt out" of having a period. They're natural to our body's development, and that in itself is why products should be free. We need more equality and justice. This idea is a big milestone, showing how policies can positively reshape humanity. It's the 21st century and girls need more power and more rights at a young age. - Janelle, District 9 - Kahului, Puunene, Old Sand Hills, Maui Lani

As a teacher, I keep a stash of period products in my classroom. I tell my coworkers of a student ever needs them, send them to me! All products are bought by me. - Rosalie, District 15 - Wailua Homesteads, Hanamaulu, Lihue, Puhi, Old Koloa Town, Omao

It's really sad how expensive feminine products are, and that some have to make the choice of sacrificing something essential (like eating) for another essential product, like feminine care products. This is not a choice, it is a necessity! - Fay , District 25 - Makiki, Punchbowl, Nuuanu, Dowsett Highlands, Pacific Heights, Pauoa

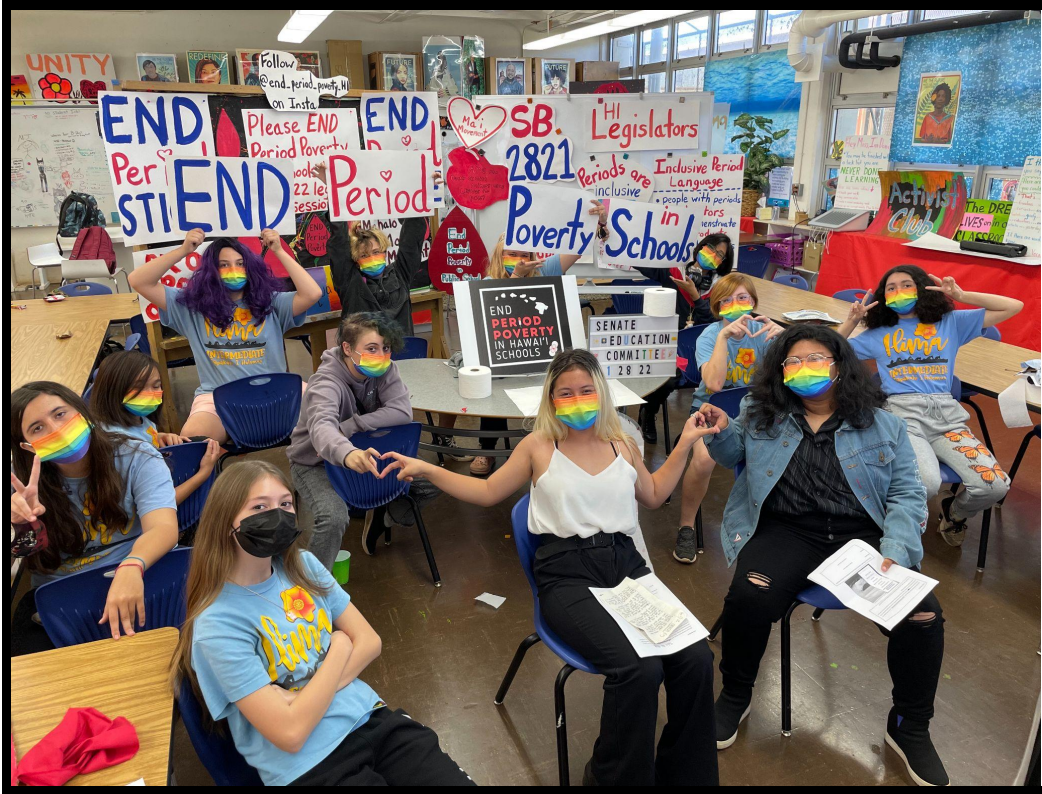


'Ilima Students Testifying on HB 2430 - First Menstrual Equity Bill (Feb 2020)



'Ilima Students Testifying on SCR 100 - Menstrual Equity Resolution (March 2021)

Testimony of Mrs. Mili & 'Ilima Intermediate School Activist & GSA Clubs in Favor of SB 2821 SD 2



'Ilima Students Testifying on SB 2821 - Menstrual Equity Bill - on Zoom (Jan 2022)

April 1, 2022

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
 Rep. Luke, Chair
 Rep. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin and I teach at 'Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach. **Myself, and the students I sponsor in the 'Ilima Intermediate Activist Club and the Rainbow Royales Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) Club are writing to you today asking for your support of Senate Bill 2821 SD 2** which directs the Hawai'i Department of Education to provide free, quality menstrual products to our Hawai'i public school students. By supporting this bill, you show that you care about providing basic healthcare and safety to public school students in Hawai'i who currently suffer from inadequate access to menstrual products.

My students' journey for menstrual equity in our public schools began in the Fall of 2019. At that time, not much was known locally about "period poverty," and as one of my students shared, "it was difficult to get the adults to listen to us" or even "care about periods."

We've learned a lot on our legislative journey for equity throughout the past 3 years, but our message remains the same. **"Period products are school supplies."** Clean and safe period products keep students able to focus on learning, and stay in school. Free period products in schools increase a student's "sense of belonging" and the data from incredible organizations like the Mai Movement tells us that having access to products makes a student more likely to attend school in general.

While the academic gains are important, there's also a bigger element to this piece of legislation: erasing shame and stigma from the natural and normal process of menstruation. Having period products for students, free and on demand, will increase awareness, and help remove the taboo surrounding menstruation.

Supporting SB 2821 SD 2 for the free products in all schools is the beginning of ending shame and stigma, and we hope that comprehensive and inclusive sexual wellness education that includes menstruation will continue to be encouraged in our schools. This matters so that we no longer have stories like *Anna's. (*Name changed to protect student identity; shared with permission.)

Anna started spotting (lightly menstruating) at school one day when she was 12. She had no idea what was happening to her body, but she noticed that the bleeding was getting worse throughout the day. Anna had seen a few episodes of the medical TV drama "Gray's Anatomy" and thought she might have, in her words, "internal bleeding." Anna also knew that medical bills were a burden to her family and that going to the doctor was "too expensive," as her mom worried about the family finances and medical bills a lot.

That night, before Anna went to bed, she wrote a "goodbye" note to her family as she did not expect to wake up the next morning. She thought she was "dying" of internal bleeding, and she didn't want to cost her family more money. Even retelling this story upsets me as an educator; education failed to help Anna learn about her own, very normal, body.

We've met more "Annas" than you might think in my classrooms and learning communities. Sometimes Anna is the foster kid who is afraid to ask her new family for period products, so she uses a sock instead. Sometimes Anna is a military child, whose mom is deployed and she doesn't feel comfortable asking dad for products. So many Annas know that their families are struggling financially right now, so they make their own period products, or skip school to bleed at home.

Supporting SB 2821 SD 2 supports students like Anna throughout Hawaii. It's the right thing to do.

Mahalo for Reading & Joining Us in Supporting SB 2821 SD 2,

Teacher Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin &

The 'Ilima Intermediate School Activist Club & Rainbow Royales GSA Club



ACOG
The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists

*American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Hawai'i, Guam & American Samoa Section*

TO: House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00PM

FROM: ACOG Hawai'i Section
Reni Soon, MD, MPH, FACOG, Chair

Re: SB282 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality
Position: SUPPORT

The Hawai'i Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (HI ACOG) supports SB2821 SD2 which requests that the Department of Education provide menstrual products free of charge to students on all Hawai'i public school and charter school campuses.

Menstruation is a natural body function that affects half of our population, and menstrual hygiene products can be very costly. Many of Hawai'i's families are struggling right now and having to make difficult decisions about what they can afford. This is a matter of equity. Individuals with inadequate access to menstrual products often are unable to attend school, face discrimination and harassment, and are more likely to have unhygienic practices around menstruation. Ma'i Movement Hawai'i conducted a pilot program in six schools on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i island and found a high need for access to menstrual products. In addition, the program found a correlation between lack of access to menstrual products and school absenteeism.

As gynecologists, we have all taken care of adolescents who miss school for a few days every month because of issues around menstruation. We should be doing all we can to keep students in school.

We respectfully ask you to pass SB2821 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Kamehameha Schools®

House Committee on Finance

Date: April 1, 2022

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Where: Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY

By Kau'i Burgess

Director, Community & Government Relations

RE: SB 2821, SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Yamashita, a me nā lāla o ke Kōmike, aloha kākou!

Kamehameha Schools **supports** SB 2821, SD2, which requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses and also requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses. This measure also makes appropriations.

In our support of Ma'i Movement Hawai'i and our work with Brandy-Lee and Nikki-Ann Yee, co-founders of Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, we've learned and recognized that though there are many challenges that our children and youth face in Hawai'i, menstrual inequity does not need to be one of them.

According to the 2021 Study by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, 26.1% of survey participants began menstruating in elementary school and 62.8% began menstruating in middle school. Furthermore, 21.6% of respondents reported missing a full day of school because they did not have access to period products. Advancing this bill will remove menstruation inequity as a barrier to the continuity of education of public school students throughout Hawai'i.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an educational organization striving to restore our people through education and advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership.

Hānai i ke keiki, ola ka lāhui; nurture the child and the people thrive. **Please advance this measure.**

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2821 SD2

TO: Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, & Members – House Committee on Finance
FROM: Trisha Kajimura
Deputy Director - Community
DATE: April 1, 2022 at 3:00 PM

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **supports** SB 2821 SD2 which requires the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals who are impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have experienced the direct consequences of the lack of health equity and healthcare access experienced by people struggling with the unforgivingly high cost of living in Hawai'i.

Menstrual hygiene is a public health, gender equality, and human rights issue that was formally recognized by the United Nations in 2014. California, New York, and Virginia currently make menstrual products available to public school students without charge.

Hawai'i's working families have been hit especially hard during the protracted economic downturn precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasing levels of housing instability and food insecurity have accompanied job losses and reductions in working hours. Prior to the pandemic DOE determined that almost half of its students were economically disadvantaged.

Young people in need should not have to bear the deep shame and humiliation of not having access to menstrual products that can be readily provided by designated school personnel. To the extent that a lack of access to menstrual products may cause youth to miss school for days or even weeks, it frustrates their ability to participate fully in their educational opportunities, including co-curricular activities. Prolonged use of menstrual products is injurious to health and well-being.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Fae Torres, Maui Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 16 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of Maui are in support of SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Cheryl Obrero, East Hawai'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Chair

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 7 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of East Hawai'i are in support of SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Lois Phillips, West Hawai'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council Member

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 21 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of West Hawai'i are in support of SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Deziree Tacub, Kaua'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Chair

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 17 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of Kaua'i are in support of SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Joshua Ige, Lana'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Chair

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

As the only Self-Advocate on the island of Lana'i, the Lana'i Self-Advisory Council of Lana'i, I am in support of SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Brandon Reny-Wong, Moloka'i Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Chair

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 7 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of Moloka'i are in support of
SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.



TO: Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Bathey Fong, O'ahu Self-Advocacy Advisory Council, Chair and
President of the Hawai'i State Advocacy Advisory Council

SUBJECT: SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

The 98 Self-Advocacy Advisory Council members of O'ahu are in support of
SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:27:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Segal Matsunaga	Save Medicaid Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save Medicaid Hawaii supports SB 2821 SD2

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:33:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sunny Chen	Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



Aloha Honorable Chair Luke and the House Finance Committee,

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii is in strong support of SB 2821. The provision of menstrual products is vital for ensuring the health, dignity, and full participation of students. Research shows that 86% of people who menstruate have started their periods unexpectedly in public, and 34% have needed to leave what they were doing to retrieve period products. Such disruptions cost considerable time and resources, which can be particularly burdensome on youth, 47% of which were already deemed economically disadvantaged by the DOE pre-COVID.

The [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) revealed the extent of period poverty and menstrual inequity in the state with nearly 30% of respondents reporting that they or someone in their household experienced difficulty obtaining period products, of which high cost was the most cited reason. The impact of inadequate access on education loss was clear in the report with 42% of respondents missing class or leaving school early because they did not have period products. Compared to a [national study commissioned by Always](#), Hawai'i fared worse. In that study, 1 in 5 struggled to get period products and 1 in 5 girls in the US have missed school.

By providing menstrual products in schools, Hawai'i helps ensure its students have equal access to education and are empowered to reach their full potential, irrespective of their gender or economic status. A lack of access to menstrual products is associated with serious health and social issues, including emotional duress, physical infection, and disease. Research also shows that students with inadequate menstrual support experience higher

rates of absence and are less able to focus and engage in the classroom. Absenteeism can lead to significant performance gaps and is linked to social disengagement, feelings of alienation, and adverse outcomes even into adulthood.

SB2821 is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity in Hawai'i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity for girls, and transgender and non-binary people.

For all of these reasons, I support SB2821 and urge you to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:05:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapono Chong-Hanssen, MD	'Ahahui o na Kauka - Association of Native Hawaiian Physicians	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

'Ahahui o nā Kauka (Association of Native Hawaiian Physicians) supports SB2821 SD2



HIPHI Board

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Michael Robinson, MBA, MA
Hawai'i Pacific Health

Kathleen Roche, MS, RN, CENP
Kaiser Permanente

Dina Shek, JD
Medical-Legal Partnership
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai
Pharmacare Hawai'i

Titiiamae Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Food Security Coalition

Date: March 31, 2022

To: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: Support SB 2821, SD2, Relating to Menstrual Equity

Hrg: April 1, 2022 at 3:00 PM in Conference Room 308 and via
Videoconference

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹ is in **support of SB 2821, SD 2**, which seeks to address period poverty by making menstrual products available free of charge on all public school campuses and public charter school campuses.

Lack of access to menstrual products prevents many menstruating youth from fully participating in society and school. In a recent survey conducted by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i,ⁱⁱ 42% of respondents reported having to miss class or leave school early because they did not have period products, with 21.6% reporting having missed a full day of school because they did not have access to period products. Cost was the most commonly identified barrier to obtaining menstrual products.

Additionally, period poverty can have devastating health consequences for those who experience it. Reusing or wearing menstrual products for too long can lead to infection, which can increase the risk for serious health problems, such as cervical cancer or infertility. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2821, SD2.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Fernandes', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Fernandes, JD
Policy and Advocacy Director

ⁱ Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

ⁱⁱ Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, 2020, *Understanding period poverty in Hawai'i*, <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/11.17.21-UnderstandingPeriod-Poverty-in-Hawai%CA%BBi-Report.pdf>.



P.O. Box 4270 Kaneohe, HI 96744
www.breastfeedinghawaii.org

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance

FROM: Patricia L. Bilyk, RN, MPH, MSN, IBCLC (retired)
Breastfeeding Hawaii Treasurer/Board Member

RE: SB2821, SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality STRONG SUPPORT

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022 3pm

PLACE: Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

Aloha Representative Luke, Representative Yamashita, Members of the Committee on Finance.

I am Patricia Bilyk, representing Breastfeeding Hawaii. Our Mission is to protect, promote and support breastfeeding through advocacy, education and collaboration throughout Hawai'i pae 'aina (Our Islands). As such we feel it is part of our Core Values of Kuleana (Responsibility), Malama (Protect/Take Care of) and Pilina (Connection/Relationship) to be involved and advocate for people with periods who need our protection as they continue their menstrual life journey and have need to have menstrual products every month.

Breastfeeding Hawaii is testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of SB2821. No young menstruating person should be without these menstrual products. Being without them causes embarrassment, shame, absence from school, leading them to use less than hygienic items (leaves, rags, newspaper) which cause diseases of the reproductive system. This bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equality.

We encourage you to appropriate the funds necessary to provide these products in our public schools free of charge to these young people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill and we encourage you to pass it out of your Committee.



March 31, 2022

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Representative Kyle T. Yamashita and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

Re: **HB – Relating to Menstrual Equality**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the House Committee on Finance -

My name is Jessica Histo, and I am the founder and president of the Hawai'i Diaper Bank. I am writing in support of **SB 2821, Requiring the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses.**

Menstrual equality especially among our developing keiki is so important. Students should not have to worry about missing school or the embarrassment of potential “accidents,” because they or their family can’t afford something as fundamental as a feminine hygiene product. Thankfully organizations like the Ma‘i Movement have been providing assistance to wāhine all over Hawai‘i. However, I believe like other basic essentials, our elected officials should be working to help all of our children especially within the school setting where they should feel safe and supported.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB2821. Please feel free to contact me with any other questions or concerns.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Jessica Histo
Founder and President



jessica@hawaiidiaperbank.org
(808)-385-1167



Hawaii Women's Coalition

TO: Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke
Honorable Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita
Committee Members
House Committee on Finance

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:00 pm

FROM: Hawai'i Women's Coalition

RE: **Support for SB2821** - Requires the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to all students on all Hawaii public and charter school campuses

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and committee members,

The Hawai'i Women's Coalition is a catalyst for progressive, social, economic and political change through action on critical issues facing Hawaii's women and girls. Members currently include 29 organizations and agencies (private, public, membership), as well as individuals. The coalition encourages the inclusion of interested parties and in achieving equitable representation.

The Hawai'i Women's Coalition respectfully submits testimony **in strong support of SB2821**. We urge you to make it effective as soon as possible and consider the recommendation of \$1,000,000 by the Senate Committee on Education. The provision of menstrual products is vital for ensuring the health, dignity, and full participation of students. Research shows that 86% of people who menstruate have started their periods unexpectedly in public, and 34% have needed to leave what they were doing to retrieve period products. Such disruptions cost considerable time and resources, which can be particularly burdensome on youth, 47% of which were already deemed economically disadvantaged by the DOE pre-COVID.

The [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) revealed the extent of period poverty and menstrual inequity in the state with nearly 30% of respondents reporting that they or someone in their household experienced difficulty obtaining period products, **of which high cost was the most cited reason**. The impact of inadequate access to period products on education loss was clear in the report with 42% of respondents missing class or leaving school early because they did not have period products. Compared to a [national study commissioned by Always](#), Hawai'i fared worse. In that study, 1 in 5 struggled to get period products and 1 in 5 girls in the US have missed school.



Hawaii Women's Coalition

By providing menstrual products in schools, Hawai‘i helps ensure its students have equal access to education and are empowered to reach their full potential, irrespective of their gender or economic status. A lack of access to menstrual products is associated with serious health and social issues, including emotional duress, physical infection, and disease. Research also shows that students with inadequate menstrual support experience higher rates of absence and are less able to focus and engage in the classroom. Absenteeism can lead to significant performance gaps and is linked to social disengagement, feelings of alienation, and adverse outcomes even into adulthood.

SB2821 is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity in Hawai‘i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity for girls, and transgender and non-binary people.

For all of these reasons, the Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition is pleased to support **SB2821**. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition



TO: Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

DATE/LOCATION: April 1 2022; 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 308/Video Conference

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2821 SD 2 RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUITY

We support SB 2821 which requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public school campuses and the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses, and makes appropriations.

Pre-pandemic, in 2019-2020 roughly 47% of DOE students were considered economically challenged. It is estimated that the pandemic has pushed 60% of local households to struggle meeting basic needs. In a recent statewide survey conducted, 80% of students surveyed faced difficulties getting period products and 50% of faculty members reported students missing at least part of a school day due to lack of access to period products. People living in poverty are most affected by lack of access to period products. These individuals often cannot afford sufficient period products and so disproportionately suffer the medical and psychological impact of reusing products, using products for longer than indicated, not using any products, or resorting to other unsafe or unsanitary materials as a replacement for period products. Lack of access causes shame, embarrassment and, at times, even missing school. Providing period products in our schools positively supports students and impacts not just their physical well-being but also their academic, emotional and social well-being too.

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to under-resourced families. Assisting more than 17,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 20 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community strengthening programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding **SB 2821 SD 2**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:07:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carrie Ann Shirota	ACLU of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

The ACLU of Hawai'i supports SB2821 SD2, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools.

Access to menstrual products is a dignity and equity issue, but every day people across the United States are unable to access the menstrual products they need. Local, state, and federal government policies cause or exacerbate inequitable access by imposing sales taxes on menstrual products, refusing to provide products in prisons and jails, exempting menstrual products from public health benefits programs, **and not making products uniformly available in public schools** and homeless shelters.

This bill would be step forward to address inequities of access to menstrual products in our public schools, specifically for those living in poverty.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Carrie Ann Shirota

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 2:14:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Vice Chair,

I fully support the approval of SB2821 to supply free period products in public and charter schools.

Sincerely,

Edith Ignacio Neumiller

County of Kauai

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 2:45:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Mcmanaman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this important measure.

Pat McManaman

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 2:58:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Reves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I teach at a public high school and believe this bill would be of benefit to our students.

March 28, 2022

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Kern and I am a 7th grade science teacher at Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School (CKMS). I am writing in strong support of bill SB2821 requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses.

As a public school teacher in my 9th year (5 years on Oahu at Waianae High School and 4 years here on Kauai), I have seen first hand the ways that inadequate access to menstrual products negatively affects students. Each year, I have provided students with period products which I have personally supplied in my classroom. On several occasions I have had students who miss class, and then tell me upon returning to school that they were absent due to their time of the month. I can only guess at how many students missed class for the same reason but didn't feel comfortable enough to tell me. Some of our health rooms across the state do have a stock of period products that they can distribute to students, but this is not nearly enough. Students should not have to ask for these products, pay for these products, or walk across campus to get these products when they are in need. I'm not sure how many of you have been to Waianae High School's campus, but it's pretty spread out. Walking from a 9th grade classroom to the health room and then to a bathroom could easily take 7-8 minutes. Seven minutes may not seem like a lot, but it is an excruciating amount of time to be a teenager walking around in the open, potentially bleeding through your clothes. Let's prevent all DOE students from ever having to face a situation like this in the future.

Just last year while on recess duty, I came across a former student sitting on a bench sobbing uncontrollably. When I asked her what happened, she said she leaked through her pants and had nothing to use. She was too embarrassed to even stand up to walk to the health room to ask for a pad. I am fortunate to have a male colleague thoughtful enough to keep a few extra jackets in his room for situations like hers, so we were able to give her a jacket to borrow so that she could walk to the office and call her parents. However, this student should never have been in such a position in the first place, and I hope that none of our DOE students will ever be in such a position in the future. CKMS is so fortunate to have been selected as a pilot school for Ma'i Movement's Ho'ohanohano Initiative which has provided us with period products this year at no cost to students. Since the implementation of the pilot program, we have had students share verbal and written appreciation for the products, and I have spoken with several high school students who are jealous of the program. Students at CKMS no longer feel ashamed or embarrassed to ask for products because they are accessible in the stalls of our girls' bathrooms. Students at CKMS no longer have to use wads of uncomfortable toilet paper/paper towels (or worse) to make it through the day. Students at CKMS no longer have to miss excessive amounts of class walking to the health room, then walking to the bathroom, and then walking back to class. As the pandemic has reminded us all, every minute of in-person classroom instructional time is precious. I am asking for you to give all of our students the opportunities that my CKMS students have had this year, and ensure that they have access to the products that they need.

Period products are health hygiene products. Menstruation is a bodily function that is just as important as any other bodily function (and arguably more important than many other bodily functions). People who menstruate cannot simply "opt out" of having their periods. The DOE does not bat an eye when it comes to buying extra masks, paper towels, hand sanitizer, etc. for students to use to prevent the spread of COVID 19 because it is the humane thing to do. The DOE supplies soap, toilet paper, and paper towels to its bathrooms (and continues to stock them when vandalism or theft occurs) because it is the humane thing to do. The DOE provides me with a supply of band aids in my classroom to use if a student is bleeding from a cut because it is the humane thing to do. Yet when the blood is from another source, a source that the student has no control

over, the DOE does not make the humane choice. The State of Hawaii can do better, and the children of Hawaii deserve better.

If this bill is not passed and we continue with the status quo, student well-being is at risk. Families should not have to make the choice between buying groceries and buying period products, but the reality is that they do, and food on the table is going to win over pads for a teenager every time. Students surveyed in the Ho'ohanohano Initiative reported using leaves, school paper, diapers, old rags, newspaper, and socks when they do not have access to period products. These items are not sanitary, and using them opens up the possibility of (sometimes lethal) infection that is preventable! All we need to do to prevent those infections is to get these products into the hands of the students, many of whom are in desperate need.

I strongly urge this committee to pass bill SB2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. If this bill is passed, we will be one step closer to ending the stigma that plagues menstruators. We will be ensuring that students are not missing one minute of instruction that they don't need to. We will be progressing toward a more inclusive and equitable education system. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo nui loa,
Sarah Kern

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 5:18:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance,

I strongly support SB2821, SD2. No menstruator should ever have to go without period products due to their lack of financial resources. DOE and public charter schools should be safe and nurturing establishments that provide youth with such products to prevent bullying, shame, and embarrassment as well as serious negative health and mental health impacts for years to come.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 5:29:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Enos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Committee

My name is Kayla Enos. I am writing in strong support of bill SB2821 requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses.

I have suffered from lack of menstrual supplies at school, and I was a very privileged teen who had the resources but didn't always know when my period was coming. Or planned for it and it came early because you know mother nature likes to surprise us occasionally. Even though I had an abundance of resources at home there were still embarrassing moments for me. No teen should have to face the shame of using toilet paper/paper towel or whatever they could find because they were not prepared and nothing at school is provided. Not to mention the poor hygiene of walking around in menstrual blood all day or with a jacket covering your shorts because you don't have the proper supplies. It is humiliating. I have missed class, sports, been embarrassed, ashamed and so much more. If the state could help a little by offering menstrual supplies when things like this occurred, it would have made being a teen girl a lot less stressful.

If I was not privileged and had the means at home having a menstrual cycle would have made things 1000 times more difficult. I probably wouldn't even go to school because I wouldn't know how to clean things up. I would stay home for the duration so I could at least shower or wash off in my own home. I know there are girls that do have to do this and miss ample time of school and that is unfair. They cannot help that they have a menstrual cycle or that they cannot afford the supplies. Providing to supplies to these girls would at the very least make them feel a little more comfortable because they know they will be clean and the proper hygiene and products that might not even be at home for them

I strongly support this bill for the reasons stated above.

*Why is this bill important?

- Period products are health hygiene products. Menstruation is a bodily function that is just as important as other bodily functions. People with periods cannot simply “opt out” of having their periods.
- Student well-being is at risk. Students surveyed reported using leaves, school paper, diapers, old rags, newspaper, and socks when they do not have period products. These items are not sanitary and using them opens the possibility of (possibly lethal) infection that is preventable!
- Menstrual inequity leads to educational inequity. Students report missing classes or even entire school days due to a lack of access to period products on campus.

I strongly urge this committee to pass bill SB2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Mahalo nui loa!

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 5:29:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep kids in school and help them feel safe and welcome by providing period products just like men recieve toilet paper.

This is the right thing to do. As an educator and taxpayer, I support this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:27:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jannalyn Igarashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a teacher, I support this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 7:41:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pana Kia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Investing in students is necessary to keep them in school.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:08:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Fryxell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I support a bill to provide menstrual equity. Oftentimes, students who do not have access to proper menstrual care products miss school unnecessarily.

Susan Fryxell

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:42:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillippe Rivera Fernandez-Brennan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

[COMMITTEE ON FINANCE](#)

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 308

PLACE:

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

March 28, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am sending testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 2821, Relating to Menstrual Equality.

My name is Phillippe Fernandez-Brennan and I was born in Honolulu and grew up in Kāneʻohe. I have also taught in Hawaiʻi public schools for the past 8 years and currently teach at Roosevelt High School in the Honolulu District. I am a PhD student in Education: Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa (UHM), member of the UHM College of Education Tinalak Council and council member of the College of Education Doctoral Students Association (COEDSA). I am testifying as an individual and do not represent the University of Hawaiʻi nor the Hawaiʻi Department of Education.

I strongly support SB 2821 because the inability to adequately manage menstruation, and specifically the lack of access to menstrual products in schools, limits full participation in school, contributes to higher rates of school absenteeism and missed activities, and negatively impacts a student's ability to learn. Chronic absenteeism is one of the most powerful predictors of student success or failure. Hawaiʻi public schools must provide menstrual products to minimize or eliminate chronic absenteeism.

More than ten states, including Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington, have laws or policies advancing menstrual equity in the states' public school and higher education systems. The Menstrual Equity Act for All, introduced earlier this year in the United States Congress, seeks to comprehensively address period poverty in schools, as well as menstrual inequity in other spaces.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2821, Relating to Menstrual Equality.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Phillippe R. Fernandez-Brennan

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 8:45:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsay Kosasa	Hawaii DOE Teacher	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a HIDOE teacher, I have always had to keep pads in my room because there would always be a student in need. As for the students who are too ashamed to ask anyone? They'll hide in the bathroom wrapping toilet paper into their underwear or just not come to school at all! Feminine products need to be available to all students and teachers should not have to spend their own money to provide these necessities.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:32:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Mendelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear State Legislators,

I spend about \$25 a month on menstrual supplies for myself. This cost can be burdensome for some families and individuals when added to all other bills and the cost of living.

A few of my female students stay home each month for a couple of days. When I ask them why they were absent, they respond that they had cramps. I am not certain of all the reasons why they stayed home, but if it has to do with access to clean menstrual supplies, schools can alleviate this barrier. Please consider supporting equal access to school for girls.

Thank you,

Erin Mendelson

Special Education Teacher

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:52:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and FIN Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of **SB2821 SD2** because I have young nieces in the Hawai'i school system. I want to ensure that they thrive without having to worry about basic health needs such as menstrual products.

This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity and end period poverty that requires low investment. Statewide statistics a [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products. Furthermore, there is evidence in our islands that students are using period products beyond the recommended safe time, resorting to unhygienic alternatives, and missing school because they cannot afford to purchase products in school or at home. The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Warmly,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 9:52:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noreen Dougherty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senators:

I support SB2821 SD2. This is a wise bill and an important one. I commend the writers of the bill and hope it will be passed into Law this session. Mahalo nui Loa.

Noreen Dougherty

Kapaa, Hawaii

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 10:03:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tammy Holt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

My name is Tammy Holt and I am writing in support of SB 2821. As families struggle with the alarming rising rate of inflation, the cost of feminine hygiene products has also continued to rise. School age children have no independent financial means and must rely on their families to provide these essential products. When parents are faced with the need to provide utility money or rent money these products may seem to be the last on their list.

Finally, teachers have long recognized this need and pay out of pocket to provide menstrual products for their students. This is real, this is true and this is another out of pocket classroom expense that a teacher will regularly provide students with because we simply cannot see a child go without. Ask any teacher who teaches third grade and above.

Please, I urge you to support this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2821

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 10:58:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leinaala Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I highly support this bill, as I am a female Native Hawaiian and a tenured Public School teacher.

April 1, 2022

To: House Committee on Finance
Rep. Chair Sylvia Luke
Rep. Vice Chair Kyle T. Yamashita

Re: SB2821 SD2 - Relating to Menstrual Equality

Aloha and Hāfa ādai, Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nina Gayle Baluran. I am a Master of Social Work Distance Education student from the island of Guam. I am attending the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. **I strongly support SB2821 SD2, relating to menstrual equality that requires the Department of Education to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public-school campuses. Requires the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public charter school campuses.**

As a famalāo'an (a woman), the issue of period poverty has affected not only myself but others around me. I have been fortunate enough to have access to period products throughout my life. I understand the privilege I have over others to access period products. As someone who menstruates, there should not be a choice between necessities or cleanliness during their period. I believe that not having the proper necessities to care for menstruation would, in return, lead to detrimental effects on not only women's health but their dignity.

Going to school while on my period has never been a comfortable experience as I did start my cycle at a young age in the 4th grade. Dealing with your menstrual cycle at a young age and being in school is not something every 4th grader can imagine, even more so when you are so young and you know little to nothing about periods. It is hard when you don't have the proper access to period products, and neither do the teachers and staff at your school. This lack of access at the time, coupled with being the only one in my class who got their period so young, affected my engagement in day-to-day activities as a child.

Passing this bill will provide schools with menstrual products to students for equal and equitable access to address and further the journey to end period poverty and menstrual injustice. Students should not have to worry about missing school or feel shame for potential "accidents" because their family is struggling to afford something as fundamental as a feminine hygiene product. Many families choose between purchasing period products or other necessities such as food and bypassing this bill provides easier access to period products that protect a student's health and well-being.

I urge all to support SB2821 SD2 to ensure equity and dignity to all menstruating students, especially those who find it challenging to attain period products. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo Nui Loa & Si Yu'us Ma'āse',

Nina Gayle Baluran
The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health
MSW Student

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 7:51:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelina Mercado	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure and appropriations so that this DOE and Charter schools can start offering menstrual products as soon as possible.

Thank you for hearing this measure and for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:17:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicelle Herron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Nicci and I am a resident of Kailua-Kona. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I believe this is a way to bring equality to girls. There is so much stigma and shame around menstration and it shouldn't be that way. It is made worse when you can't afford or, are caught off guard when your period starts. Having period products in schools would ensure that girls would be able to attend classes and school without interuption due to their period. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:57:15 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Takehara Strand	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For the Martin Luther King Day of Service, Oahu Democrats joined with the NAACP and other organizations to host a food drive for the Hawaii Foodbank. We decided to add the Ma'i Movement for donations in hopes of developing awareness of the need for feminine hygiene products, particularly in underserved communities. To our surprise, we didn't need to educate much about it because our donors absolutely understood the need. In addition to 1.74 tons of food for the Food Bank, donors brought boxes of tampons and pads - so much so that we needed to provide extra cars to deliver the products to Ma'i. The people understand the need.

While there is still more to do for women in shelters and on the poverty line, this bill will make a big difference for girls in public schools.

Mahalo for passing this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:02:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Wilson	Kihei Charter School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Amanda and I am a teacher at Kihei Charter School. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have personally seen how many times students are in an emergency state, begging other students and teachers for period products. Because of this, an incredible student took it upon herself to raise money to furnish the high school girls' bathroom with period products and tracked how many were used, as well as the cost to provide such products. All of us were astounded at the need and the cost of this service. This is why I know that every single public school absolutely needs these supplies. It is for dignity and to make sure that every single girl in Hawai'i doesn't have to stop thinking about her school work to handle personal hygiene.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Amanda Wilson

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:07:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trina Orimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Trina Orimoto and I am a child/youth clinical psychologist, mom, and Honolulu resident. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I believe that no child should miss school because of their lack of access to life-giving period products. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

With gratitude,

Trina Orimoto

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:21:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Gray	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All...

Thank you for the opportunity to support Bill SB2821. I am a resident of Hawaii island and the school health assistant @ one of our high schools in Hilo.

The donations and resouces received from Ma'i Movement Hawai'i has helped our students tremendously. Students now have access to period products freely, without having to ask or feel ashamed. They have been able to take care of themselves in a timely manner and practice personal hygiene properly.

For the students and families with financial difficulties and/or limited access to period products, I hope Hawaii schools will be able to continue offering these free resources and products in the future.

Thank you

Renee Gray

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:32:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dayna Mersberg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Dayna and I am a resident of Ewa Beach and work in the Waianae complex as a school nurse. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have witnessed firsthand the need for more accessibility of these products for students and the relief students experience when we are able to offer them period products to wear during the school day. I have been fortunate enough to receive a donation of period products from Ma'i Movement, and distributed these packaged period products at some of the schools in the Waianae complex. Staff in the health room have expressed how quickly they went through all of the donated product because the need was so high in their school. Some students come to school hungry because their families have a limited food budget - can you imagine where period products fall on that list of necessities? Please pass this bill for students so they can concentrate in and enjoy their school day.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:46:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katrina Karl	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee,

My name is Katrina Karl and I am a teacher at Waipahu High School. I am submitting testimony in support of SB2821. I strongly urge you to pass SB2821 because the provision of free menstrual products would be very beneficial to students across the state. Our school was lucky enough to connect to the organization Ma'i Movement this school year, and many students have benefited from their donations of menstrual products, which need to be replenished at least once a month at the station that most students are able to access. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and know that if is passed, this bill will afford many students greater access to the hygiene and dignity all deserve.

Katrina Karl

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:52:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara (Bobbie Jo) Beyerle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of bill SB2821 SD2. It is essential that the women in our community have access to menstrual products, which are a medical necessity. Specifically, our menstruating students. Without menstrual equity we allow our menstruating students to miss important instruction time in school. Menstruating students should find equity in all aspects of their lives including the classroom. We can only ensure this by providing access to menstrual products in schools. Menstruating students should not be forced to miss instruction time searching for products, or forced to skip school because they cannot afford products. We should not continue allow students to feel shame when looking for products whether having to ask friends or teachers. I have seen firsthand working with the Ho’ohanohano initiative, how having products available out in the open has allowed students to feel less shame about their Ma’i. It has helped to normalize and present one’s Ma’I as something natural and biological and given non-menstruating students more understanding of this concept. It has encouraged both menstruating and non-menstruating students to learn more about menstrual cycles and proper use of products. Seeing the student’s “buy in” and appreciation of the Ma’I Movement and the Ho’ohanohano Initiation has been heartwarming. As a Nurse Practitioner, seeing my students take initiative in matters that affect their health and wellbeing as well as the health and wellbeing of others is pure magic!

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 9:58:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Airabella Molina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Airabella and I am a resident of Kaneohe/Student of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am testifying in strong support of SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have witnessed first hand family members and friends who were dealing with homelessness and other financial issues that put them at risk for period poverty. Being able to provide period products for all menstruators in public and charter schools in Hawai'i will be a great start to the end of period poverty. I am currently writing a literature review for my capstone on improving the reproductive health among underprivileged women in Hawai'i through increasing health literacy and access to feminine products. Passing this bill will be the one of the first steps in the right direction. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:04:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emi Shigekane	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha mai,

I am a highschool student at Kamehameha Schools, and I strongly support SB2821, which calls to provide menstrual products in all public schools statewide. When you walk into most public bathrooms, feminine hygiene products are available for purchase. However, schools in our state don't even offer than luxury. I would argue that our keiki deserve even better, free period products in every school bathroom. Young girls that are new to the experience of menstruating are often embarrassed to ask teachers or friends for products, and will therefore miss classes, inhibiting their learning. Others simply aren't able to find products in the case of an "emergency" and are left in a dire situation. Menstrual products are a necessity, and I believe that our schools have the responsibility to provide such necessities for our students. Therefore, in order to support the health and learning environment of our keiki across the state, I strongly support this bill and hope you will as well.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:26:54 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Dolata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is David and I am a resident of Wailuku, Maui. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I work in the youth services field and know the importance of hygiene products for everyone. In particular, those who cannot afford them will be at the most risk for infections and sickness related to lack of resources and products. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

April 1, 2022

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the House Committee on Finance

I am testifying in strong support of SB2821 as I have witnessed the utter tragedy and shame that many of our homeless and low-income female students and families experience by having to go without feminine hygiene pads as for the families I work with, these items are considered "luxury" items. Some students have even been "scolded" for using the restroom during work/class time to make home-made pads out of wadded toilet paper. Some students have also missed school due to having periods and are embarrassed to go to school due to having no access to pads.

Schools do what they can, but the majority do not have enough. I am grateful for organizations such as the Salvation Army and the local Hilo High and Waiakea High Key Club for stepping up and donating feminine pads for our many needy young female youth/teens in homeless and economically distressed living situations. Most recently, the Mai Project has donated, but there still are not enough pads to meet the needs of all our needy female youth/teens.

We recently passed out over 200 pads to Kau High and Pahala Elementary which has over 165 homeless youth of which over half are young female teens. Families are extremely grateful and they expressed to me and school staff that the pads are a greater necessity than even hand sanitizers and PPE. Even prior to the pandemic, nearly all schools requested hygiene pads as a higher priority than even school supplies as this is something under the radar for most organizations that donate to schools.

Please help solve this problem for our most vulnerable and needy youth as these items are needed, but our kids will not come up to ask for these. Help save the dignity, self-esteem and confidence of our young female/teens in Hawaii so they can better learn and thrive in our community.

Respectfully,

Courtney Hamakawa
DOE- East Hawaii Community Homeless Concerns Liaison

Sylvia Luke, Chair
Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair
Finance (FIN)
Monday, March 28, 2022
3:00 PM 308 via Videoconference
In support of SB 2821 SD2

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Honorable Finance Members,

My name is Kristen Kameda. I am in the master's program with the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health at UH Manoa and I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 2821 SD 2, which requires the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to all students in Hawaii public schools, including charter schools.

Providing menstrual products to the students of Hawaii means promoting gender equity in our schools as well as safeguarding their education. Recent studies show that about a quarter of menstruating students struggle with access to period products, and that many teens still feel a stigma around menstruation.

- A study found that 4 in 5 menstruating teens said they have either missed class time or know someone who missed class time because they did not have access to period products.
- 86% started their period unexpectedly in public without the supplies they need.
- 80% of teens had to improvise, making a pad or tampon out of toilet paper, which is an extreme health concern, and
- 1 in 5 teens have struggled to afford menstrual products

In Hawaii, a study done by Ma'i Movement Hawaii shows that 26% of survey participants began menstruating in elementary school and 62% began menstruating in middle school. Feminine hygiene products are a basic necessity for adolescent girls, and for low-income students, the cost of menstrual products is a burden.

Furthermore, the issues go beyond stigma to affect the quality of education. Menstruation should never disrupt one's day, limit opportunities, or cause panic. Therefore, when a budget is set aside to provide free toilet paper and hand soap, menstrual hygiene products should be included in the same budget.

I am currently interning at an alternative high school program for the Waianae-Nanakuli complex area. Just yesterday, a female student "had to go home because [she] got her period" and did not have a pad or tampon with her. However, the program teachers buy menstrual products with their own money to have at hand on site in situations like these. Fortunately, this enabled the student to stay in school for the rest of the day as menstrual products were readily available to her, free of charge.

Senate Bill 2821 SD 2 recognizes the importance of access to basic needs and its impact on gender and education equity, and I strongly support this bill. I gracefully ask that you pass Senate Bill 2821 SD 2 to promote and encourage gender and education equity. Thank you for the time and allowance to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 2821 SD 2.

Mahalo nui,
Kristen Kameda

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:47:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Siena Yeo	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Siena and I am a student of Punahou School. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I believe it can potentially provide relief to persons who are struggling, whether it be financially or otherwise, to access menstrual products. Many individuals are unable to access the sanitary products necessary for them due to financial constraints, low income, poor hygiene education, and cultural and societal shame and stigma, etc. Period poverty affects a lot of people including low-income families, homeless persons, students, and more. I believe menstrual and sanitary products should be free of charge and supplied to all public school students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 11:01:10 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Henderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Erin Henderson and I am a school counselor at a high school in Kapa'au. I am testifying in strong support of SB2821, which was passed out of the Senate Education Committee with a \$1 million appropriation. It is important because I have witnessed numerous female students in desperate need of period supplies while at school as well as the emotional turmoil that goes along with not having the necessary protection.

As a school counselor, many students come to me when they have a problem. Numerous female students were coming and asking if I had a pad they could have. So much so that I created a Donor's Choose project, The Bare Necessities for Girls, to acquire needed period supplies for our students. The success of this project was immeasurable. After receiving my materials, I created flyers to post in all of the girls' bathrooms, including one in each and every stall, which notified female students that feminine supplies were available at no charge. The response was immediate!

The girls immediately started coming to me to get pads and tampons. Some comments from that first day were... “Oh my gosh Ms., you saved my life today,” and “This is so great ‘cause I didn’t know I was gonna get my period today and I don’t have anything with me,” and “Thank you so much for doing this for us.” The girls also loved that I had pouches for them to take so carrying their supplies was easy and covert. In the days and weeks that followed, the girls continuously streamed into my office needing supplies. Some of the girls would bring in friends who were too shy to come alone, allowing me to meet other students who I haven’t had the opportunity to meet yet. As my schedule demanded me to be out of my office for longer periods of time, I decided to place bins of supplies in the bathrooms. The supplies are used up each week and I continue to refill them each Friday.

The project has helped many girls with normalizing the fact that menstruation is part of their life and nothing to be ashamed of. It has helped create a culture at our school where it is okay to ask for supplies and it is perfectly normal to not feel great when you are on your period. Many girls have come in to talk to me about sensitive topics like menstrual cramps, bloating, proper hygiene and safety, as well as the emotional ups and downs of menstruation.

This bill MUST be passed! Our girls deserve (and require) these period products. I truly believe that the passing of this bill, and the resulting free availability of period products at school, will help boost academic achievement because the girls will be fully able to focus on their learning rather than stressing out about the possibility of having a period related accident at school and the resulting humiliation and social rejection that would surely follow.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:06:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alejandro Pena	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: Aloha, I am writing as a father of a daughter, a husband of a wife, and son of a mother. In supporting this bill I am doing my duty as a father to ensure that my daughter and her peers have safe and ready access to menstrual products. Today is the day to start the destigmatization of women in their menstrual cycle by making it free and accessible to young women in school. Growing up is hard enough as it is without having to worry about where you can find sanitary products. By passing this bill you will bring the issue of menstrual equity to the state level and closer to the national level where it can make the largest impact. I urge you state representatives, as children of mothers, and parents of children to better the lives of future generations by ensuring that in an ever changing and challenging world they can still have free, safe, and ready access to the menstrual equity that everyone deserves. Thank you for your time in considering my message and those of other urging you to pass this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:30:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa Lariosa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the Bill for menstrual equity by providing menstrual products to students free of charge. Many times, in low income schools our students are not able to purchase these items, therefore they stay home. They end up not coming to school, missing out on their education. Sometimes, these students also ask us educators for menstrual products, which now means we are using our personal money for our students once again. I can barely provide for my own child, and now I am providing additional care for my students. Please support this bill, so our state can better assist our students and eliminate at least one variable that may hinder a child's education.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 1:08:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lea Minton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke and Finance Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to stand in strong support for SB2821SD2. I ask that you pass this bill and provide menstrual equity for our youth.

Mahalo,

Le'a Minton, CNM

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:25:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaime Stevens, MD, MPH	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Jaime Stevens, MD, MPH
1177 Queen St. #2707
Honolulu, HI, 96814

March 29, 2022

Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: Testimony in Support of SB2821

Honourable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

I am a child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrist on O'ahu writing in support of this initiative to end period poverty in Hawai'i.

I encourage you to support the resolution as lack of access of menstrual products to those in school can result in not only inadequate educational opportunity, but also psychological trauma and preventable medical conditions that can be serious and even life threatening.

As a majority of Hawai'ian families have reported concern about their ability to purchase menstrual products in the pandemic, I urge we join the 21 other states that have passed or are proposing this year to provide products in schools, an action that studies show has increased school attendance, and is likely to prevent health complications.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration in protecting the health and welfare of all of your constituents.

Jaime Stevens, MD, MPH, FAPA

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:34:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Starr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB2821, as a teacher, as a woman, and as a mother of a daughter in high school. All girls and young women in schools should have access to menstrual supplies for free. This is a right. It ensures that girls and young women do not miss school due to a lack of supplies. It prevents very humiliating situations for girls and young women. It is an equity, justice, and an inclusive practice.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting SB2821

Sincerely,

Sarah Starr

Pre-K SPED teacher

Honolulu District

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 3:37:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jewelyn Kahele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to help end period poverty throughout Hawaii Public Schools

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:26:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adriann Gin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Adriann and I am a resident of Honolulu, born and raised. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I believe Hawaii's young, developing women shouldn't be unintentionally put at a disadvantage due to natural biological changes. Feminine hygiene products cost money and is truly a basic need; being able to meet this need should never come down to the ability to pay, or tradeoff calculations such as "should I buy my daughter the feminine hygiene products she needs, or use the same money to buy food to feed our entire family?". The impact of these conditions – this kind of tradeoff decision making – can cause trauma and have the potential to inflict far-reaching consequences on a young, developing girl's life. Let's provide our young Hawaii girls with the support they deserve, so they can focus on doing well in school, being involved in their community, developing relationships with their peers and teachers, rather than worrying about embarrassing moments or worse, missing school entirely and affecting their chance at a brighter future. Please, I implore you to pass this bill for the future of all Hawaii's wahine.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Adriann Gin; Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:38:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arwen Revere	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Arwen and I am a high school student from Kailua. I am testifying in strong support of SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. I believe that this is an important issue as approximately 8/10 students face difficulties in accessing period products. Almost every day that I am at school, I hear at least one of my classmates ask me or one of my peers for a tampon or pad. There have been times when no one has a product and students use other materials such as napkins or folder paper. I believe that the passing of this bill would help alleviate financial burdens as well as the issue of menstruation stigma for students my age.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Arwen Revere

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 8:55:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Sato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Kidani and members of the committee. My name is Michelle Sato and I am writing in support of Bill SB2821. As a woman, I believe that menstrual inequality must be solved. Not only do we need to show young girls we care, but we need to give them a chance to go to school everyday without biological blockers. Until we do that, our progress on pay, promotion, and breaking the glass ceiling doesn't have meaning.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 10:51:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mitchell Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR

AND THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

SB 2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality

Day and Date: 4/01/2022

Time and Place: 3:00 P.M. VIA Videoconference Conference Room 308

IN SUPPORT

Aloha,

My name is Mitchell Wong and I'm a Master of Social Work student at the Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am testifying in favor of SB2821 SD2 relating to menstrual equality.

My reason for taking this position on SB2832 SD2 is that I agree with the current bill that this resource should be available to students as other hygiene products are. This is a problem with a feasible solution. I wouldn't want the next generation to have to know, think about, or realize that some of their classmates missed out on school or had health problems, due to the lack of menstrual hygiene products, when they get older or when it's brought to their attention. Or even a child who doesn't have access to this product knowing they can rely on the system that they're emersed in to get their back.

I am in support of SB2821 SD2 because I believe this is a step towards improving the current educational environment, breaking the barriers for healthier lives, changing stigmas, and supporting emotional well-being during the developmental stages.

Thank you,

Mitchell Wong

March 30, 2022

To: Representative Luke, Chair
Representative Yamashita, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: **SB 2821 SD2 “Relating to Menstrual Equality”**

Aloha and Hāfa ādai, Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Zamantha Zamora, and I am a graduate student in the Masters of Social Work program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am in the Distance-Education program, attending virtually from the island of Guam. **I am writing in strong support of SB 2821 SD2, “Relating to Menstrual Equality,” requesting the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai’i public and charter school campuses.**

Students with periods should not be struggling yet embarrassed to find access to period products on school campuses. Period products are unfortunately expensive, especially to those families who cannot afford period products for themselves and their children who experience menstruation. Period products should be freely provided in schools to help bridge the gap in period poverty and end period stigma.

Conversing about menstruation and experiencing periods for the first time should be normalized in schools and communities. Although the topic of menstruation continues to be a stigma in today's society, menstruating students and non-students should not be afraid to open up about their health regarding menstruation, given that experiencing periods is part of our human, biological life. Back when I was in middle school, I was too afraid and embarrassed to talk about my period to my family and friends because I felt like it was inappropriate to discuss. Others may perceive it as a sensitive topic since it deals with bleeding from the menstruating person's uterus. Talking about our health is vital, especially if we are menstruating, because it is critical to be aware of our monthly cycles, whether we are regular or irregular menstruators.

Likewise, people with periods should not endanger themselves by utilizing inappropriate alternative products to hold and support their blood flow. Numerous studies have revealed that people with periods, including myself, have used other alternatives, such as rolling up a bunch of toilet tissue, diapers, rags, unfortunately, reusing their sibling's or children's diapers, etc., to contain their blood flow. This situation has put countless lives at risk and may develop prolonged health complications. Therefore, it is crucial to provide free period products to help students

from impoverished families and, ultimately, support the menstruating community and end period poverty and period stigma.

I strongly urge this committee to pass SB 2821 SD2 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo nui loa and Si yu'us ma'āse'

Zamantha Zamora
The University of Hawaii at Manoa
Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health
MSW Student

29 March 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair of Finance

FROM: Nikki Huntington, BSW

Subject: SB 2821 SD2 - RELATING TO MENSTRUAL EQUALITY.

Date: Friday, April 1, 2022

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Place: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 308

State Capitol

415 South Beretenia Street

Good morning, Representative Sylvia Luke, Vice-Chair Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, and Members of the Committees:

I am writing in strong support of SB 2821 SD2, in reference to Menstrual Equality. This bill would require the Committee on Education to provide free access to menstrual products for all students on all public-school campuses. The State Public Charter School Commission would also be required to provide access to free menstrual products for all students on their campuses. This would then appropriate moneys toward easy access for menstrual products on all campuses that within those jurisdictions. Effective 7/1/2050.

This bill will strengthen the support for young women in public and public charter school facilities who require menstrual products. Currently, a lack of access to menstrual products in schools limits full participation in school, contributes to higher rates of school absenteeism and missed activities, and perpetuates gender and class inequities. If an adequate supply of quality menstrual products were made available to students, it will prevent the extended use of products beyond the recommended time or use of alternatives, which otherwise has a direct and negative impact on student health. This measure will promote menstrual equity by providing menstrual products to all students, free of charge, on all public and charter school campuses.

According the Washington Post:

“D.C. students will have access to free pads and tampons in school bathrooms, under legislation approved Tuesday by the D.C. Council. The bill, which was introduced by Council member Brooke Pinto (D-Ward 2) — whose 2020 council campaign focused on the need for the legislature to better include the perspectives of women — requires public and private schools to stock period products in every girls’ and non-gender-specific bathroom in middle and high schools” (Weil, 2022)

Weil, J. Z. (2022, January 4). *D.C. students will get free pads and tampons in school bathrooms*. The Washington Post. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/01/04/dc-period-products-bill-students/>

By creating a safer environment where young girls feel comfortable enough to embark on a new journey through puberty, these forms of legislation can change the way girls feel about going to school during their menstruation. Instead of being forced to menstruate onto their clothes because a young girl cannot find any menstrual products near the closest bathroom, the pain and embarrassment of a similar situation can easily be avoided with the same amount of effort that it takes to replace an empty toilet paper roll.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2821 SD2.

Nikki Huntington, BSW.

Masters Student from the Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa School.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:00:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lacey Gero	Alliance for Period Supplies	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 30, 2022

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Michele Baldovi and I have been a school counselor in Hawaii's public schools for 29 years. I am testifying in strong support of bill SB2821 which was passed out of the Senate Education Committee with a \$1 million appropriation to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses.

- I was a middle school counselor for 27 years before being given the opportunity to work at the elementary school level. Sadly, the concerns are not much different.
- Just this past month, a 4th grader came into the health room because she had just started her period and didn't have any supplies with her. We looked through the cabinets and could not find a single pad until we checked the first aid kit used by teachers on field trips! Yes. That is where it was and who knows how long that sanctuary napkin had been in there?!?!?! I asked our health aide about supplies and she was told the school had to buy it. How much time did this girl spend out of class? 15 minutes, most of the time because we were looking for supplies.
- While working at the middle school, I purchased supplies with my own money to keep in my office. I was closer in proximity to the students and they didn't have to waste time walking to the health room which was across campus (5 minute walk each way, adding 5-10- minutes for the time it takes to take care of themselves) equates to 15-20 minutes of missed classroom time! Multiply that by 5 days a week and that is a lot of missed time. Many of the students don't have access to supplies at home and some have told me they don't want to ask their parents for it.
- Ideally, it would be great for each classroom to have a small supply in their rooms, but I would settle for free supplies to our students and schools! Access to free menstruation supplies (not just pads, but the bags to dispose of used hygiene items) is key to helping our students not only stay in school and class, but feel confident in themselves to manage their own hygiene needs and not feel embarrassed, but student absences because of a lack of access to period products

Why is this bill important?

- Period products are health hygiene products. Menstruation is a bodily function that is just as important as other bodily functions. People with periods cannot simply "opt out" of having their periods.
- Student well-being is at risk. Students surveyed reported using leaves, school paper, diapers, old rags, newspaper, and socks when they do not have period products. These

items are not sanitary, and using them opens up the possibility of (possibly lethal) infection that is preventable!

- Menstrual inequity leads to educational inequity. Students report missing classes or even entire school days due to a lack of access to period products on campus.

I strongly urge this committee to pass bill SB2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Mahalo nui loa!

Michele Baldovi, M.Ed, NBCT
School Counselor

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:13:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Samulski	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Teaching here in Hawaii, two moments of my career stand clear.

This year, as a high school teacher in the DOE, I found out my transgender students, female to male, had a horrendous incident of body dysmorphia when they didn't have menstruation products one day when their cycle started.

And instead of having a simple and discreet place to grab what the hygiene product, required for this basic human need, they had to get a pass to the health room and ask around to multiple adults, until they found who was covering the health room that day, and could actually give them a pad. I implore you to use empathy and imagine how devastating it would be, for this already high-risk population, to have to deconstruct their identity as a man to multiple individuals in a desperate and time-sensitive issue to find quote-unquote "female" hygiene products.

I taught 3rd grade at a state-funded charter school. One day at recess my 9-year student came up to me and told me her period had started and she had didn't have a pad. I brought her to the health room, while working to contact home, only to find out that our health room didn't have a single menstruation product available. I left my teary-eyed student in the room, begged my neighbor teacher to cover my class, then proceeded to run around door to door to ask all the female teachers if they had a spare pad. No one did.

This is unacceptable. The lahui that makes up the teachers of Hawai'i has a duty and obligation to our keiki. That responsibility includes, first and foremost, our students' emotional and physical safety. In failing to provide ready and available access to menstruation products, we the state, are failing in our kuleana to provide the necessary materials and learning environment for our student population to grow and be successful.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:15:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria DeMercer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly suport SB2821 SD2. It is long overdue.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:37:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austen Kinney	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Austen Kinney and I am a resident of Maunawili, and I am a freshman at Punahou School. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. I believe that every menstruator, no matter the gender or economic status, should have equal and convenient access to menstrual products. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:38:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Diana Harvey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2821. Please consider passing the important bill so that girl can have a equal access to education. Many girls miss school due to not having period products.

Mahalo,

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:13:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elliot Woods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of this!

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:25:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Preis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Emily Preis, I am a 11th grade student at Castle High School, and I am testifying in support of Bill SB2821 on menstrual equality and equity in schools.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:11:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Gaeta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former high school teacher, I have witnessed students missing class/school days or sports practice because they didn't have or couldn't afford period products, therefore needed to find time outside of their schedule to catch up or faced the consequence of being behind in school. I would buy and supply my students and basketball players with period products in hopes to eliminate the missed classes or embarrassment.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:25:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Kawaihani Ozawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill will promote menstrual equity by providing menstrual products to all students, free of charge, on all public and charter school campuses.

The lack of access to menstrual products in schools limits full participation in school, contributes to higher rates of school absenteeism and missed activities, and perpetuates gender and class inequities.

Having an adequate supply of quality menstrual products available to students will also prevent the extended use of products beyond the recommended time or use of alternatives, which otherwise has a direct and negative impact on student health.

Please pass this measure. Thank you.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:50:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deisha Davis	Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Deisha Davis, resident of Ka'u and counselor at Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School. I am testifying in strong support of Bill 2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have experienced first hand the tremendous need at my school. We have over a hundred identified McKinney-Vento students that are in need of basic living needs. My students have benefitted a lot from the Ma'i Movement and continue to ask for the free products. They are so grateful and appreciative to receive the products. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:14:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Fukumoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of SB2821. I believe that there is a need for menstrual products to made available in schools, especially for those who cannot afford them due to current living conditions or due to financial hardship.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 1:25:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Redford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Jessica Redford and I am a nurse and a resident of Holualoa. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have witnessed as a nurse the obstacles that lack of period products create for students who cannot afford or access them; it leads kids to skip school during their periods, which puts them at risk of falling behind in their education.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:34:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen McKee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the passage of SB2821 SD2 relating to providing menstrual equality.

Mahalo,

Eileen McKee

Kihei

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:05:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susanna M.G. Rivera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony supporting SB 2821. I appreciate all the hard work you have done to move the bill this far.

I have been a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on the Big Island (Hilo and Kea'au) for the past 36 years. Though I currently teach preschool through grade 5 at Kea'au Elementary School, I have taught Deaf and Hard of Hearing students at Hilo High School, Waiakea Intermediate School, Waiakea High School and Continuing Education.

I have been fortunate that the families of my female students have been able to provide menstrual supplies when their daughters needed them. I know this is not always the case. I also know that children develop at different rates and I have had students need menstrual supplies in elementary school. It was a surprise and we were fortunate that our Health Room had some supplies. No student should ever have to miss school because their families could not afford menstrual supplies. Please continue to support SB 2821.

Thank you,

Susanna MG Rivera, MA, NBCT-ENS:ECYA, D/HH

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:06:18 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cyd L. Hoffeld	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Cyd Hoffeld, a resident of Hilo, and strong supporter of **SB2821 SD2**. As a Kanaka Maoli woman who was a single parent of two beautiful daughters for many years, I understand the financial struggles of having to shelter, clothe, feed, transport, and provide necessities like menstrual products not only for myself but for my daughters too. I also remember as an adolescent girl leaving campus when I started my period and having to wrap my jacket or sweater around my waist until my grandma came to get me. It was so embarrassing.

This bill would not only help struggling parents, it would increase the attendance of menstruating students in classes by providing free period products during school hours while minimizing the embarrassment of not having any menstrual supplies when on campus.

Knowing that period products would be freely available and identified as part of a schools line item purchase would signify that the Department of Education views a person's menstrual cycle as normal and natural which would reduce much of the stigma youth often feel. This is why I **strongly support SB2821 SD2** and I hope you do too.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 4:45:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Monk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Finance Committee Chair Rep. Sylvia Luke and Committee Members:

I support this bill and consider this money well spent. Other testifiers were able to provide data from their successful pilot project and appalling stories of girls who did not go to school because they could not afford menstrual products.

As legislators you have worked for equality in work, school, sports, and equal opportunity in all arenas, yet half our students are female and this is an easily fixable disadvantage that keeps poor female students from attending school.

I note that the DOE budget is \$2 billion and Keith Hayashi estimated menstrual products would cost less than \$1 million per year. A small price to give poor student the ability to attend every school day.

Please vote to pass this bill,

Amy Monk

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 5:28:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Tomita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Dr. Kevin Tomita and I am a resident of Makiki. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. As a clinical psychologist, I understand that the access to period products for youth is of utmost importance. In an empirically based research study, Cardoso and colleagues (2021) found that those with period poverty are significantly more likely to have subsequent mental health concerns, including moderate to severe depression. Increasing access to period products and related education would decrease period poverty in our education system, effectively contributing to the mental health and wellness of our keiki and education system ohana. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

FOR: SB 2821 Relating to Menstrual Equality
DATE: April 1, 2022, at 3:00 PM
FROM: Alona Sabugo, SN, University of Hawai'i Maui College Nursing Program

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alona Sabugo and I am a nursing student at The University of Hawaii Maui College. I am writing in **strong support of SB2821**, which requires the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on all public and charter school campuses.

As a woman and a student, I have experienced the complex difficulties of handling the menstruation cycle. As a former high school student, I can recall numerous times when I unexpectedly got my period during class and needed to sit in the nurse's office the whole day simply because I did not have access to menstrual products. I have witnessed fellow students resort to unhygienic alternatives and miss school days because they cannot afford to purchase these products, in school or at home. Having these products readily available, free of charge, in school bathrooms could help alleviate some of the economic strain that comes with having a period.

Passing this bill will provide schools with menstrual products to students for equal and equitable access to address and further the journey to end period poverty and menstrual injustice. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Alona Sabugo, SN

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:59:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Stange	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Female hygiene products are school supplies. I have had situations in which female students had to miss valuable instruction time due to natural biological function. This is an issue of equity for our female students.

Female students in secondary schools (middle and high schools) must have access to feminine hygiene products on campus.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:36:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alani Bagcal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Alani Bagcal and I strongly support SB2821. Providing free period products in public schools is an incredible and necessary service to those who need it. In fact, it is life changing. Young women, girls and those who menstruate are deserving of free access to these products in order to feel comfortable and take care of their needs.

Please pass SB2821. I hope that I have children one day, and if they need period products that their Legislators and school systems will support their needs.

Mahalo nui,

Alani Bagcal

96815

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:44:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in **support** of SB2821 SD2. This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity and end period poverty. There are so many stories that I could write here about the challenges menstruating students and adults have in schools. There is no one model of what a person who might need free supplies looks like. As an educator, I always had supplies in my desk for anyone who might find themselves without, including colleagues. It might surprise you to know that the issues vary. One year it was a second grader who began her cycle in class. She was 8. Her family and I worked through some unexpected challenges of helping her within the school day. This included supplies but also counseling help. There was the time I had to intervene for a student who got "caught in the hall" when she wasn't supposed to be there. The educator who was writing her up could not see the anguish on her face when all she wanted to do was get to the nurse's office across campus. I can also talk about the unhoused student who had her books, library books and menstrual supplies all taken in a sweep while she was at school. She could not afford to buy more. Supplies need to be readily available around the schools. Will it cost \$\$, yes. Are those \$\$ worth it ? 100% yes in creating a safe environment for all.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:45:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kara Kusunoki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2821.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:22:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Toy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to voice my enthusiastic support for SB 2821. As an administrator in the Department of Education, I have seen firsthand how students learn best when they can maximize their classroom time as well as feel comfortable in class. For large campuses like the one I work on, sending a student to the nurse for menstrual products can take students out of class for 20 minutes or more. I also have had a number of students ask, "Miss, can you make sure I'm not leaking?!" in hushed tones as they try to navigate their day. Attending school is a right and being able to do so with the correct supplies is essential. Please vote YES on SB 2821 to show our keiki we care about their comfort and learning. This will be a law that we can celebrate proudly as a state with such progressive support! Mahalo.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:31:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sasha Giron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Sasha Giron, am writing in support of SB2821. When I was going to school, pads were only accessible at home. If there was an emergency, the nurses office didn't have much. I believe that this measure is a necessity for young girls who may not have access to pads, who may not have the privilege of having pads at home.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 8:48:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
SHARON T. NOHARA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Sharon Nohara and I am a resident of Lahaina, Maui. I am testifying in support of SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. As a retiree from Lahaina Intermediate School office I have witnessed students who due to limited access to period products in school experience embarassment and hesitancy in asking for a period product. If you make period products readily available free in several locations throughout the school the problem of access and cost for the students would be resolved. It would also give the students the confidence to know that they can count on this support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bill .

April 1, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am a teacher, parent, and community member from Honolulu who is a proud supporter of SB2821: Relating to Menstrual Equality.



No matter what gender we are, I think we can all relate to the horror and anguish of an embarrassing shhi shhi stain. We quickly look for the nearest book or anything to cover our okole. If we sit on a water puddle, on a bench, we are so quick to point out, "I promise it's only water, not shhi shhi! Now relate that shame to a bright red spot on our bottom from a leaking period. Bright, glowing red can easily be spotted far, far away. As shhi shhi dries clear, a bright red period spot dries into a dark reddish brown crust that takes massive Mulan effort to eventually remove.

I asked my daughter if her period ever leaked in middle or high school. She replied, "many times." I asked what did you do? She said "wrap a jacket on my waist of course". Hmm, not everyone is able to bring an EXTRA jacket to school to tie around our waist and get tie dyed red.

Periods are finicky. Though periods claim to be monthly, my own experience was very irregular. Sometimes light, sometimes heavy, and very unpredictable on which day of the month it would be an uninvited guest on my schedule.

A 2021 survey conducted by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that: "42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products. 22% of the respondents missed the school day entirely, due to the lack of period products, and of those who missed school completely, 12% missed 3-5 school days and 6% missed 6-10 days of school from the entire academic year." This study and others show the stark complexities of period problems. Our female youth are already challenged with enough adversities in middle and high school. Providing period products will help alleviate a big worry for young ladies and shift the focus to future aspirations.

As my friend Mili would say, "Lucky We Teach" Mahalo,



Celeste Yukiko Endo

Celeste Yukiko Endo

Aloha Members of the Committee,

My name is Andrea Jewell and I am a master of public health student at UH Manoa. I am writing to you today asking for your support of Senate Bill 2821 SD 2 which directs the Hawai'i Department of Education to provide free, quality menstrual products to our Hawai'i public school students. By supporting this bill, you show that you care about providing basic healthcare and safety to public school students in Hawai'i who currently suffer from inadequate access to menstrual products. When students lack access to period supplies, they will use other things they have access to such as newspaper, diapers, leaves, folder paper, napkins, socks, toilet paper, or old rags in place of clean and safe menstrual supplies which can lead to many health problems. 8 out of 10 students in Hawai'i have faced difficulties getting period products when they need them.

I believe that voting yes on SB 2821 SD 2 supports gender equality. The lack of access to menstrual products is a form of gender-based oppression. Menstrual products are essential to reproductive health and should be deemed as such. This bill supports basic hygiene of the young women of our state. Just like we expect toilet paper and paper towels to be available in public restrooms, we can and should expect the same of menstrual products. Menstruation is a natural occurrence, experienced by over half the population throughout their lives, and should not be treated differently. This is a major public health concern. The medical issues facing individuals without access to menstrual products included preventable infections that can cause cervical cancer and infertility. These problems can be life-threatening if gone on too long. SB 2821 SD 2 recognizes that access to menstrual products is integral to health and safety.

I have seen firsthand how impactful lack of access to menstrual products can be for young women. Growing up going to public schools there were always girls who did not have the supplies they needed. This formed so much shame around having to make products last longer than they should, making due with other products they had available in bathrooms, or having to ask for help from others

around them. In worse case scenarios, girls would avoid coming to school on days when they were out of menstrual products at home. Having a bill such as this one would make an unbelievable impact of the lives of the young women of this state.

SB2821 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty in Hawai'i and promotes common goals requiring low investment in public health, basic equity, education equity, and gender equality. I strongly urge you to support SB2821 to help improve the lives of the young people in Hawai'i.

Thank you for all the work you do

Andrea Jewell

MPH Student

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:13:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Landes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2821 SD2. My name is Mike Landes, and I am a teacher at Lahainaluna High School, the husband of an elementary teacher at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School, and the father of two public school students. I am also the HSTA Maui Chapter President. In my work as a high school teacher, I have unfortunately had a number of interactions with female students who need access to menstrual products but do not have any, who then have no recourse other than to go around the classroom asking if anyone has any to spare, or to go to a teacher who is known to have free supplies available that they purchased with their own money out of the goodness of their own heart. As the father of a 9 year old daughter, I am dreading the day that she comes home telling me a story of personal humiliation when she finds herself without the necessary hygiene products at school. I know of students who told me sheepishly that they did not attend school because they were in such a situation, and chose being absent and avoiding the embarrassment rather than coming to school and keeping up with their education that day. Nobody should have to face these situations. This is a matter of basic human decency, educational opportunity, and gender equity. Please, do the right thing and vote in support of Senate Bill 2821 SD2.

Mahalo for your time,

Mike Landes

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:25:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaylee Nagata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ever since I was at a young age, there was always a stigma on period products. I would sneak pads in my pockets and make them as quiet as possible when I was changing pads during school. I spoke of it as if it were a haunted story. As if I were to be banished or bring shame upon myself for openly talking about a process that I go through naturally every month. Making period products inclusive to all students and opening the conversation, showing that schools value these necessary products for student's hygienes makes both myself, and a lot of students feel comfortable and included by schools. Showing that they value our hygiene and want to keep us as hygienic as possible. Accessibility plays a huge role in this bill and so many students will benefit from this and from gaining this accessibility, both myself, and so many others, feel safer and included, as well as feel valued by our school system. That is why I support SB2128 and why I feel it should be passed.

The Thirty First Legislature, State of Hawaii
Committee on Finance
Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke
Honorable Vice Chair Kyle T Yamashita
Hearing: April 4, 2022 @ 4pm

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the committee,

My name is Renzymeir Baloran, a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Thompson School of Public Health. I am writing in **SUPPORT** of **SB2821** requiring the Department of Education and State Public Charter School Commission to make menstrual products for free to all students on all campuses.

Meeting the needs of people - food, water, shelter are all essential foundation of human health and well-being. Menstrual hygiene is a natural occurrence that cannot be undone and shall be treated as a basic need. Period poverty continues to affect a wide range of people including students, low-income, homeless girls and women, transgender, and non-binary individuals and the incarcerated. There is a vast need of menstrual products; however, many are faced with the issue of being unable to get access to free or menstrual due to financial constraints, societal shame, and inadequate access to clean and safe facilities. A national U.S survey was conducted among menstruating teens and 20% of teens reported difficulty with affording menstrual products and 80% knowing someone who missed class due to not having access to period products.¹ Menstrual products are also not available with access using government benefits, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Special Supplemental Nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).¹ A 2021 study conducted by the Ma'i Movement Hawai'i supports these claims in Hawai'i as 30% of their survey respondents reported difficulty obtaining period products and citing cost as a reason as well.²

A survey conducted by The Ma'i Movement Hawai'i revealed that The Ho'ohanohano Initiative conducted by Ma'i Movement Hawai'i showed the feasibility and cost efficiency of incorporating free period products to students. They showed through their pilot that their initiative was affordable being able to distribute 30, 876 products in semester to 2,353 people who menstruate costing only \$4-\$5 students annually.³

Providing school-based interventions for free menstrual products is extremely beneficial as it can eliminate other barriers with accessing products. By offering products at school this eliminates an extra step of students having to go to stores to obtain products eliminating the need for other things such as transportation. School-wide access to period products can also allow easy access for those who get their period unexpectedly and have no other options. Access to menstrual products can also decrease potential risk for infection that could result in cervical cancer, and infertility. Not having access to menstrual products can also lead to negative consequences to students as they may opt to miss school altogether due to menstruating.

As a woman who menstruate, I remember throughout my life a series of moments in which I had trouble obtaining menstrual products that I would have benefitted from programs that offer free menstrual products in school.

I was in the 6th grade when I first got my period and it happened when I was in school. I remember going to the bathroom frightened and fortunately enough it was in the last 30 minutes of school, I used toilet paper to hold me over and then frantically ran home when the bell rang.

In high school, I remember also getting my period unexpectedly once again and I had asked for a pad or tampon from my peers but to no avail. Although, I was ashamed of the situation at the time, my friend mentioned it to my teacher who fortunately had some available at her desk in case an emergency like this happened.

Throughout my college career there were instances in which I had to salvage my money to be able to afford menstrual products. Usually opting to skimp out and buy cheap meals such as ramen noodles or toast to fit menstrual products in my budget.

There have also been times in which I had emergencies and not only was there no free resource for menstrual products but there weren't even stores in school which had available products. Fortunately, I was able to contact a friend who was kind enough to lend me some products until she could bring me to the store off campus to buy some. I was thankful for my friends and teachers for having support me and not making me feel ashamed but having access to menstrual products should not be dependent on the generosity of a peer or a teacher.

SB2821 will bring us one step closer towards ending period poverty in Hawai'i and working towards health equity.

Thank you,

Renzymeir Baloran

1. Lindsay.Capozzi. Period Poverty: The Public Health Crisis We Don't Talk About. Published April 5, 2021.

<https://policylab.chop.edu/blog/period-poverty-public-health-crisis-we-dont-talk-about>

2. Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i, 2020, Understanding period poverty in Hawai'i, <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/11.17.21-UnderstandingPeriod-Poverty-inHawai%CA%BBi-Report.pdf>.

3. Period Poverty & Menstrual Inequity in Hawai'i Public schools



Testimony of

Chaslynn-Nicole Kapuaonalani Ahuna Gaspar

March 31, 2022

TO: Senate Committee EDN, FIN

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Gilbert Keith-Again, Vice-Chair

SUBJECT: Requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public and charter school campuses. Appropriates funding to DOE and appropriates funding to the charter school commission.

Hearing: Friday, April 1, 2022, at 3:00 pm Via videoconference - Written & Oral Testimony

Aloha mai kākou,

I am testifying, again, in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB2821 SD2**, which genuinely passed out the Senate Education Committee with a \$1 million appropriation. It is essential because I have witnessed many women on the Wai‘anae coast, significantly in poverty, experiencing a lack of resources. Furthermore, an estimated 25% of women in the United States could not afford to pay for menstrual products before the pandemic. My colleague Nikki-Ann Yee, co-founder of Ma‘i Movement Hawaii, stated, “I never thought period poverty would touch our shores. But the more I looked into the issue in our state and found such a lack of resources, the more there was a strong call to action.” (Yee). We, community advocates, hope this proclamation will lead to policy changes to make these feminine hygiene products accessible for everyone. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma‘i Movement Hawai‘i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products. Furthermore, there is evidence in our islands that students are using period products beyond the recommended safe time, resorting to unhygienic alternatives, and missing school because they cannot afford to purchase products in school or at home. Consequently, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity and end period poverty that requires low investment. The bill addresses this issue and promotes common public health goals, fundamental equity, gender equality, and education equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB2821 SD2.

We have been collaborating on advocacy about critical procurement and service delivery issues that directly impact our communities. PHOCUSED is a nonpartisan project of the Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice. It comprises health and human service organizations and their people across Hawai‘i.

I genually appreciate the consideration of the passage of SB2821 SD2.

Mahalo, for your consideration.

Chaslynn-Nicole K. Gaspar

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 6:24:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha Tomori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2821 SD2. My name is Samantha Tomori and although I teach kindergarten at Kea'au Elementary School, I've previously taught 5th and 6th grade for 7 years in a low-income community. As you know, 5th grade is around when students start menstrating and by 6th grade, nearly all the girls in my class had hit puberty. Allow me to share some stories that may encourage you to support this bill. One year, a child had such a bad period accident, her shorts were covered in blood. I immediately sacrificed my jacket to tie around her waist because I couldn't let her be embarassed if the other kids noticed her blood-stained pants. Another time, a girl bled so heavily I had to have a custodian come to disinfect her chair. These situations are preventable. If we supply classrooms with period products, we can help our students prevent these accidents, and attendance will improve. Students will no longer have to stay home to prevent the emarassment associated with not having access to period products.

Thank you for supporting this bill!

Samantha Tomori

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 6:53:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I come from Papakōlea, O‘ahu. I'm a Kanaka Maoli born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I'm writing in full support of SB2821 SD2.

We need support and equality now for period poverty.

Support SB2821 SD2.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee.

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2821 SD2

I am a female teacher in a high school where female students feel comfortable approaching and requesting feminine products from. Unfortunately, I need to send them far off to our health nurse to receive these essential products that take their time away from our classroom.

Menstruation or transforming into a red panda (Pixar's Turning Red) is considered a blessing BUT has become a curse to at most half of our school's population if they can not afford these necessary products, in turn creating the crisis called period poverty.

The Ma'i Movement initiative has gathered their data stating that absenteeism increases due to a lack of accessibility to feminine products for female students. This only perpetuates the disenfranchisement of our female population. It is not our fault that we are blessed with our ma'i. And female students' education shouldn't have to suffer due to it either.

This photo was taken from the Seattle Kraken's female restroom while I was on my Spring Break. If the Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle can provide free feminine products to their fans, why can't we offer them to our students?



My name is Cassie-Ann Jacinto of Lahainaluna High School. Please vote in support of Menstrual Equality SB2821 SD2 so no family has to choose between food and essential feminine products.

Mahalo for your time and this opportunity to testify.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:08:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bransen Hatakenaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a male high school student, I feel that this bill is absolutely essential to ensuring our schools promote student achievement. Menstrual products are NECESSITIES for females, just the same as toilet paper and soap are. Furthermore, a lack of period products has been proven in numerous studies to have a negative impact on the attendance of female high school students. Missing school can be devastating for students, putting them far behind in classes and increasing their struggles for them. This is worse for low-income students, who already are the victims of period poverty and face the greatest consequences of this lack of access. This can be easily avoided if we provide these products in an emergency so that they don't have to purchase overpriced products or miss valuable class time. All in all, I believe that menstrual products are fundamental products for females in school and that we ALL need to do our part, whether we are males or females to pass this critical bill and ensure we truly promote equity.

Support for SB2821 SD2
March 31, 2022

Relating to Menstrual Equality

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Aloha Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Laura de Leon and I reside in the county of Maui. I am writing in support of SB2821 SD 2 requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses.

The issue of menstrual inequality is an important conversation to end period poverty. From my personal experience in school, I have experienced the embarrassment of being without the necessary period products due to financial strain and circumstances which led to missing important classes. I strongly believe no student should miss valuable class time or experience embarrassment from lack of access to period products.

According to the State of Hawai'i Department of Education, there are more than 45,000 students with periods between the ages of 10-18 registered in Hawai'i public non-charter schools. These students need access to clean period products because people with periods cannot opt out of having their periods. Additionally, students' overall wellbeing is at stake as menstruators are resorting to using other items such as school paper, rags, newspapers, and socks when they do not have period products. This can open the possibility of deadly infections that are completely preventable. With the passing of this bill, the invitation for equity and dignity is welcomed for menstruators because menstruating is as important as any bodily function.

I strongly urge this committee to pass SB2821 SD 2 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo nui loa!

Sincerely,
Laura de Leon
MSW Candidate
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:38:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dagan Bernstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you committee for your time to review my testimony **in support** of SB2821. As an educator working in the K-8 division I have experienced the need for both health supplies and education for our students. This bill will help create the pathways for access to these important basic health needs that we as citizens need to ensure are available to our students. Along with access to clean water, food to eat, and opportunities to learn, our schools are important places for students to ensure their health needs are addressed.

This bill is an important step toward making our schools places where our students are cared for. Thank you again for considering this bill and I am happy to offer my testimony as an educator **in support** of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:58:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kendrick Leong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Kendrick Leong and I am a resident of Ewa Beach. I am testifying in strong support of SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. Making period products available at schools for free is in line with Hawaii’s commitment to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 3, “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,” and Goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”

Our students deserve equal access to hygienic menstrual products to lead healthy lives and avoid preventable infections. There is evidence in our islands that students are using period products beyond the recommended safe time, resorting to unhygienic alternatives and missing school because they cannot afford to purchase products in school or at home.

The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:00:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kerstyn Afuso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I stand in full support of SB2821 SD2 because all students deserve to have access to menstrual products. Menstrual products ARE school supplies, they are not optional materials just because they are not directly related to school. But, they are directly related to the health and wellbeing of a young student’s life. Nearly half the school-aged population required menstrual products, yet many are not able to obtain these due to financial constraints. As a girl once in middle school, getting my period for the first time was scary and shameful. Adding more shame to this natural part of life would be wrong on behalf of schools who have the capacity to help their students. I fully support SB2821 SD2 to bring menstrual equity to young students at all public school and public charter school campuses.

Mahalo,

Kerstyn

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:11:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Molly Mamaril and I am a resident of Makiki, O‘ahu. I am testifying in **strong support of SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because this is a necessary health measure to ensure that students can focus fully on their academics and not worry about their menstrual cycle which is a healthy and natural part of life. *As a woman, having access to period products in schools is commonplace in developed countries and as a resident of Hawai‘i, I‘m surprised that this needs to be voted on in the first place.* Without period products, a student's day or week can be derailed because they don‘t have what they need to care for themselves. This is a simple fix and I urge you to support it. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Molly Mamaril

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:35:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Kern	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke and Vice-Chair Yamashita,

Thanks for this opportunity to testify in strong support for SB2821. For too long our State has been stuck on the status quo when it comes to the hygienic needs of our young female students, and it is high-time for us to move ahead to support these needs in the schools and help keep their focus on classroom learning.

As other states have discovered, the costs of supplying these hygienic products are a very small slice of the overall budget, yet the benefits are immediate and in so many cases meeting urgent, yet understated needs.

Please carry the momentum of this responsible change and pass SB2821.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:37:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Higashiguchi	Wahine Kokua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Amanda Higashiguchi and I am a resident of Oahu who is currently attending secondary school at the University of San Francisco. The amount of support that I have for SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools, is giant. I recently started a charitable organization called Wahine Kokua amid the pandemic. We as an organization fight against period poverty for the state of Hawaii by providing the less fortunate women of our state with care packages that will assist them monthly with their menstrual cycle. I am only 20 years old and did not realize how lucky I am to have easy access to the products that I need every month, until creating this organization. Wahine Kokua has been in contact with the Ma'i Movement, the organization that got this bill to where it is today. Brandy, Nikki, and Jamie are one of the most amazing and inspiring groups of sisters I have ever met. If there was a group to get free products into underprivileged communities and schools in our state, it would be them. I speak very highly about their motives and to see their progress is heartwarming. The reaction we receive as a whole when these women and girls are given free menstrual products, they have told me that they think it's a joke. That there is no way they are able to receive all of this for free. Some have said it feels like it's Christmas. Something so overlooked and minute is actually so necessary. Thank you for your time and for allowing me to show support for this bill. This would be huge for our state.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:44:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Christe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in support of SB2821.

Women should not be in the position of being forced to choose between getting an education or sitting out because they can not afford menstrual products.

It's simply unconscionable to me that this is still an issue in 2022. Please support SB2821 to improve menstrual equity.

aloha,

Dr. Anthony Christe

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:30:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2821. As a teacher and menstruator, I can attest to the fact that having menstrual products in schools would benefit both students and teachers. Menstruation is a biological process and feminine hygiene products are expensive; therefore, to ensure equitable access to education for all, schools need to supply feminine hygiene products.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:32:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Damien Waikoloa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Damien and I am a resident of Manoa Valley (House 23, Senate 11). I am testifying in strong support of SB2821, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because I have believe that no one should have to be absent from school and risk a loss of learning due to the lack of menstrual products.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Mahalo,

Damien Waikoloa

3227 Alani Dr.

Honolulu HI 96822

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:51:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyra Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 31, 2022

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Kyra Jones, and I am a resident of Wailuku, Maui, and an MSW candidate attending the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health (distance education program). I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821,SD 2** which would make period products free in all public and charter schools.

I became aware of the issue of period poverty when my professor gave us a group assignment on policy analysis in my Advanced Social Welfare Policy Analysis & Change class. The assignment gave us an opportunity to interview a handful of stakeholders who shed more light on just how important **SB2821,SD 2** really is.

Lack of access to menstruation products *is* a big deal for developing female students who already face so many pressures at school, especially socially. Shame and social stigma, exacerbated while on their period, have made it difficult for some students to avoid excessive absences leading to decreased academic and athletic performance. With regard to hygiene, students report being forced to use and reuse already soiled pads, tampons, leaves, brown paper bags, paper, cut-up rags, and even diapers because their families cannot afford proper feminine hygiene. These practices may lead to worsened outcomes such as infections and toxic shock syndrome and may even have negative long-term consequences on a student's general mental health.

Equitable access to free feminine hygiene products in schools could help to normalize menstruation, as a naturally recurring event, in healthy adolescents. With reduced embarrassment, and a supportive environment, students can make more informed decisions with regard to their bodies and overall health. They could even participate more fully, in school and school sports, with less stress and increased focus. **SB2821,SD 2** promotes greater advancement toward basic equity, education equity, public health and gender equality in our State. It can bring greater awareness and draw attention to what students are naturally capable of academically and scholastically as opposed to what they lack.

I urge you to support **SB2821,SD 2** so that positive social norms and social inclusion become the rule instead of the exception and are encouraged throughout Hawaii's schools and among our youth and students. They are the leaders of tomorrow and we will be relying on them when we no longer have the strength and stamina to depend on ourselves. For now, they depend on us to help shape their future and to make it hopeful and bright! We must prove to them that we can be trusted to take a stand, especially, when it is in their favor to do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **SB2821,SD 2**.

Sincerely,

Kyra Jones (MSW candidate, Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health, UH Manoa)

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 10:53:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing in support of SB2821, relating to menstrual equality. Sanitary products are not inexpensive. By providing tampons and pads within the school systems at no cost, we will help kids attend school when they might otherwise stay home when they have their periods. This is not only educationally important, but is also a kind thing to do. Periods are often unpredictable, especially when kids are young. Therefore, students can't always come to school prepared.

Let's just do the thoughtful thing. Pass this bill and help out kids. We can afford it and they deserve it.

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:08:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Robinson-Onderko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB2821 SD1. Our students who bleed should not be burdened with the financial barriers associated with period products. I humbly ask that you do the right thing and vote in favor of this important, impactful measure.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lynn Robinson-Onderko, Ewa Beach

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:22:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandon Cha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2821 SD2.

I am a high school teacher in the Leeward district of Oahu. As a male, I do not know what experiences my female students have to go through in terms of menstrual hygiene, but I know that it can play a very important part in their lives, sometimes affecting their school attendance. I want to teach in a school system that supports all of my students' needs, both academic and health related, regardless of each student's financial circumstances.

The passage of this bill will help alleviate financial burdens on students for whom good menstrual hygiene is a necessary component of being able to participate in meaningful learning. Such burdens should not stand in the way of participation in quality education and these appropriations will make a tangible impact on students' lives.

Please vote in support of SB2821 SD2. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:42:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erica Princes Andres	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand on my written testimony in support. Please pass this bill.

House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

April 1, 2022
Conference Room 308

RE: Support of SB2821 SD2 - Relating to Menstrual Equality

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Jolene Mae Pascua and I am a resident of Kahului, Maui and a Master of Social Work Distance Education student. I am attending Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. **I am testifying in strong support of SB2821 SD2, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools.**

It is important because as a woman myself, I believe that period poverty is a health concern and the overall wellbeing of students. I personally have experienced the shame and embarrassment of having a menstrual incident in school when I was in middle school, so providing the necessary means to prevent any incidents for girls and women in school settings is an urgent matter and need for students. Despite the fact that I have been fortunate enough to have access to period products throughout my lifetime, I strongly believe that others should also have the opportunity to access period products freely.

This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity and end period poverty that requires low investment. Statewide statistics a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products. Furthermore, there is evidence in our islands that students are using period products beyond the recommended safe time, resorting to unhygienic alternatives and missing school because they cannot afford to purchase products in school or at home. The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity.

I strongly urge this committee to pass SB2821 SD2 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Jolene Mae Pascua, BSW
The University of Hawaii at Manoa
Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health
MSW Student

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:49:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arlan Redoble	Ma'i Movement	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Arlan Redoble a sophomore from Farrington High School, in the Honolulu school district; and I'm writing in strong support of Senate Bill 2821 which requests the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free in all Hawai'i public schools and charter school campuses. I'm in support of this bill because of how beneficial it would be for those with menstrual cycles. Coming from a low-income community this would help those who are less fortunate worry less about one more thing because menstrual products shouldn't be a privilege, it's a necessity that everyone no matter their economic background should have equal access to. Having menstrual products in schools will greatly benefit a large portion of the schools' students. Statistics have even shown that there had been a decrease in student absences when menstrual products were distributed in school. I've encountered many situations in which students and friends haven't gone to school because of their embarrassment from lacking the needed supplies that this bill could give to them and all the others that are struggling. Considering these reasons I strongly urge this committee to pass Senate Bill 2821 to ensure equity and dignity for menstruating students. Thank you for this opportunity and for allowing me to testify for this bill. Mahalo nui loa!

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:20:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryah	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Ryah Abang and I am a senior at James Campbell High school. I am testifying in strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools. It is important because **after partnering with the Ma'i movement and placing a Ma'i spot in school, I've had girls and menstruators alike come up and thank me personally, explaining their own stories how they sometimes start their cycles unexpectedly, forget their products at home or don't have the money to afford the products sold at school. On instances like these, we have to use paper towels and toilet paper which aren't made for menstruation, leaving us shame and embarrassed. Knowing that there is money allotted for our school supplies and academic needs, I believe period products should be on that list. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.**

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:29:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Baker and I am a proud public school educator at ‘Ilima Intermediate in ‘Ewa Beach, where I teach choir and ‘ukulele. I am writing in strong support of SB2821 requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai‘i public and charter school campuses.

I invite you to think back to when you were in middle school (a little traumatizing, I know) – all of the social pressures, the constant anxiety, and so much... new. For me, it was the era of glasses, braces, and acne (yup – all at the same time). Now, imagine that you are beginning to menstruate. Cue: one more thing to add to the overwhelming pile of tweenage despair. More stress, more anxiety, more fear, more confusion. Middle school will always be stressful (and let’s be honest, a transformative time of our lives for better or for worse) – but what if we could alleviate even just one stress from these students?

As a teacher, I have had many students approach me, scared and timid, asking, “Do you have, um... well, I forgot my.... and I’m on my... um, do you have any extras?” It breaks my heart to see their fear. I can hear their thoughts: what if my teacher doesn’t have extras? What will I use instead? Can I go to the health room? Will they have?

Then, I see the relief in their eyes when I say, “Of course. They’re right here.” Imagine if we could provide that relief for students before they even have to ask.

Thankfully, a Hawai‘i with free period products for public school students is not one we have to imagine – it is a Hawai‘i we can make a reality with your support. I strongly urge this committee to pass SB2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Mahalo piha.

Apelila 1, 2022

Committee on Finance

Rep. Sylvia Luke

Rep. Kyle Yamashita

Aloha mai e Lunaho'omalua Luke, Hope Lunaho'omalua Yamashita,
a me nā Lāla o ke Komite,
(Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Committee)

‘O wau Phoenix Maimiti Valentine. ‘O Mākaha ku‘u one hānau. ‘O Ka‘ala ku‘u mauna.
He wāhine au. He haumana au. Kāko‘o au iā **SB2821 SD2**.

I’m Phoenix Maimiti Valentine. The sands of my birth are in Mākaha. Mt. Ka‘ala is my
mauna. I am a female. I am a student. I support **SB2821 SD2**.

I’m a former homeschooled student however I did attend a public charter school once.
That school welcomed students who were houseless with facilities to shower. Almost
every student there was given free breakfast & lunch because our mākuā couldn’t afford
it. This school gave incentives for reading & achievements in math so students could
earn points to redeem for clothes, footwear, school supplies and canned goods.
Necessities like these may seem strange to others who have never experienced life
without.

I support **SB2821 SD2** because it provides a nicety which is also a necessity for girls
during menstruation. I’ve experienced times when I needed a feminine product
unexpectedly and bathrooms have supplied such options. Little stressors like this, occupy
a person’s mind negatively. **SB2821 SD2** invests in positive thinking by eliminating worry.
SB2214 will be an example of excellent health practices, and dignity. Mahalo for your
consideration.

Na‘u nō, Phoenix Maimiti Valentine

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:09:10 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Meinecke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee,

My name is Jill Meinecke, and I am writing testimony in strong support of SB2821 Relating to Menstrual Equity.

This legislation will have a positive impact on the youth of Hawaii. Menstruators and non-menstruators alike will benefit from having this legislation passed. Young menstruators will no longer have to face shame and suffer in silence for experiencing a normal bodily function in school.

Growing up, attending middle school, I myself had to use toilet paper, paper towels, and other materials when I didn't have peiod products at school. I would often worry, to the detriment of my learning, about getting up to switch classes and someone seeing a blood stain on my pants. As a woman who is 35 years old, I long to go back in time and give that young woman a hug and tell her that in the future, young women in schools don't suffer anymore of embaressment over periods, as it's been normalized in society and schools, and products are ready and available if needed. We now have the opportunity to do better than before; Let us be the reason we can comfort menstruators now and in the future.

Please pass this bill. The benefits all students, teachers, and families will experience is immeasurable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jill Meinecke

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:09:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jamie Kapana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jamie Kapana, and I am a resident of Kapolei.

I am testifying in support of SB2821 because I believe that students' priority while in school should be learning and not making sure they have period products.

Growing up, I lost my mom at a young age. This made me ashamed to talk about my period because I didn't have anyone close around me to educate me and put my worries at ease. While in the foster care system and group homes for a year or two, I remember how ashamed I felt if I needed to ask for period products while also going to school. It was hard for me to adjust, making it even harder during that time of the month.

I know firsthand how hard it can be to deal with from a student's perspective. Because of this, I feel it's my responsibility to speak up and ask that you pass SB2821 to make period products accessible for students, so they don't have to worry about running into that situation. Many may feel that this topic is only for girls and women, but that's not true. What example are we giving young boys when we dismiss it "because it's only a girl's problem."

No one is being left out and missing out when everyone can show up for school and be given the same opportunity to worry-free about their day. Periods are normal and happen all the time. We need to break the stigma around the topic, and I firmly believe this bill will help do so.

Thank you!

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2821. I have been a teacher at Radford High School for the past 10 years. I support this bill, because period poverty is a real issue that many of our students face every year. Menstruating students miss class, skip school, and have to choose between their education or staying home to avoid the embarrassment of not having proper hygienic supplies, like pads and tampons, to go to school. As a teacher myself, I have given out countless menstrual products to students in need that were purchased with my own money. I would never turn away a person in need of such a product, but what about the students who don't feel comfortable asking? Maybe it's because of financial circumstances, or perhaps because their teacher is a man. Regardless of the reason, no student should have to feel this anxiety for something that is natural and in no way their fault.

Please support this bill and show our community that we value all students. That no matter what income your family makes, you are always safe, valued, and taken care of at your school. We provide food, toilet paper, and soap for every student. So why not menstrual products? Half of our population has a menstrual cycle and are in need of these products every month. It is gender and economic discrimination if we do not provide these products for our menstruating students. How can someone be expected to come to school and focus on a lesson while they may be bleeding through their pants? Support this bill and show our keiki we care about their health and education and that we are always here to help. Join the growing number of states that support menstrual equality, and pass this bill. Please support SB2821.

Thank you,

Christine Christe

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:36:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bambi Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for allowing us the space to testify in support of Bill SB 2821 sd2.

Women's history month has just come to a close and in this past month I was able to work with the Mai Movement on the Big Island by hosting donation drives across the island. In the planning process, I have learned about period poverty and the importance of creating awareness and normalizing conversations about periods and period poverty.

it's saddening to hear the suffering that teens go through and it's also shocking to hear that they are choosing to miss school each month because they are unable to purchase products for themselves.

I humbly ask you to consider voting in favor to pass this bill so that the teens can be supplied the feminine products that they need and can shift their focus to their schooling and their education.

Mahalo For Your Consideration,

Bambi Lau

HLTA- Hawaii Island Chapter Coordinator

Women in Lodging Membership Recruiter

March 31, 2022

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Jodi Kunimitsu and I am a math teacher at Maui High School. I am writing in strong support of SB 2821 SD2, related to menstrual equity.

One of the things that I have heard over and over since the start of the pandemic is how important it is for students to be present in school. Another thing I have heard over and over is how we need to support their social and emotional well-being. As a teacher, I completely agree. However, I don't believe that these statements have been backed up with action.

Students who are on their period and don't have access to menstrual supplies are forced to either 1) stay home until their period is over or 2) risk leaking if they don't have the proper menstrual supplies - which is not only emotionally embarrassing, but also a safety issue, since menstrual fluid is a bodily fluid. Imagine this happening once a month for 10 months and multiply that by every year the student is menstruating while in school.

The passage of SB 2821 would ensure that no student has to go through either of those scenarios above. It would ensure that students can feel comfortable and safe coming to school while going through their menstrual cycle.

I cannot accept the idea that cost is an issue. The HIDOE spends a lot of money on things that do not directly impact student success in the classroom. For example, the money spent on standardized testing has ZERO impact on student success. However, a student being physically present in the classroom does have an impact on student success. If funding can be given to things like standardized testing, it surely can be given to menstrual supplies to ensure students can attend school.

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 2821. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Jodi Kunimitsu

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:52:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Suyama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I did not realize until recently that there are young women who do not have the resources to obtain needed menstrual products especially while attending school. This leads to unnecessary absences from school affecting their education and future. The Mai Movement Hawaii program has compiled data showing how period poverty affect our young women. As such I support the proposed legislation.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:55:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Logan Okita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill SB2821.

My name is Logan Okita and I am a National Board Certified Teacher at Nimitz Elementary in Central District and Vice President of the Hawaii State Teachers Association.

Students who need menstrual products should have access to free products at our schools so they are not excluded from learning or activities due to embarrassment or physical discomfort. Menstrual products are a basic healthcare and safety need the same way bandaids and face masks. Schools give bandaids and face masks to students without thinking twice about the cost, so schools should be able to provide menstrual products without a cost to students also.

After listening to the testimony of students in support of this bill, I realized I grew up with the privilege of being able to access the products I needed to care for myself easily. I did not have to worry about where I would find a pad when I needed one because my parents could afford to keep our bathrooms stocked with menstrual products along with other basic hygiene supplies. I did not think twice when a peer needed a pad because I could give them one from my backpack and replace it when I got home. Every person who menstruates should be able to access these necessary products with ease.

Please vote in support of Senate Bill SB2821. Thank you for the opportunity to testify!

Sincerely,

Logan Okita, MEd, NBCT

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:59:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Coco Iwamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of this health & education equity bill. It is about time that legislators have finally found the "courage" to stand up and remedy this inequity - transcending years and years of petty politics and embarrassing excuses for inaction. All it took was a lot of young people retraumatizing themselves by publicly discussing the negative financial and social impacts of menstruating while poor. Year after year, you made them come back and testify - despite little to no testimony in opposition. Thank you for your bold leadership on this issue.

Aloha, Chair rep. Luke, Rep Yamashita, and all the other house of representatives

“There are an estimated 16.9 million people who menstruate living in poverty in the United States.” (Caitlin G. pg 7.) My name is Kaitlyn Allen and period poverty is a big problem that needs to be addressed. Please support SB 2821. I believe that we should require schools to give free period products to menstruators. The fact that there are people who had no choice but to use leaves because they didn’t have access to any period products is absolutely atrocious. People who menstruate don’t choose to bleed every month. You say that buying period products for schools will cost too much money but you usually make \$17.8 billion dollars from tourism. Also saying that “It’s too expensive” is basically telling us that our education is not worth the money. When I’m bleeding through my pants do you think I’m paying attention? No, I’m thinking about how I’m going to get to the next class without being judged for having my period. I had a friend who was on her period and she had no period products and she was bleeding through her pants. She had to continually wipe her seat because she didn’t know what to do. This also brings me to another point: the stigma around periods is insane. An example of this would be when I had my first I was too scared to tell anyone including my friends because I felt embarrassed even though it’s a normal thing. I have even stayed home due to me having my period. In conclusion, you should require schools to give out period products because it will messes with our education and it messes with our health. I strongly urge The house to pass SB 2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for reading and supporting SB 2821.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:22:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vickie Parker Kam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support to SB2821 SD2 Relating to Menstrual Equality, requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses. We support this legislation because:

- Ensures all students have access to menstrual hygiene products. This is particularly important for students whose families are struggling financially and have limited means to purchase these products;
- It is a health concern, essentially because people cannot “opt” out of having their periods. This impacts student wellbeing as menstruators are resorting to using leaves, school paper, old rags, diapers, newspapers, and socks when they do not have period products. This opens for the possibility of deadly infections that are PREVENTABLE;
- Reduces the amount of time that students miss school because they do not have access to menstrual hygiene products. A 2021 study by Kotex found that two-thirds of students agree that too many people have to miss out on valuable school time because they do not have the period products they need;
- It is time to destigmatize the need for menstrual hygiene products. These products are now generally only available in the school nurse’s office for a FEE.

This legislation would have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of students experiencing Period Poverty. It will also serve as ho‘omaha for those who have experienced the shame and stigma associated with being caught “unprepared” when their menstrual cycle begins unexpectedly while at school.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo nui loa!

Vickie Kam, HIDEOE Educator

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:29:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
audrey christian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi my name is Audrey. I am a student of ilima intermediate. I do not experience periods but many of my friends and my partners expiance them. I just wanted to ask Why do schools pay for something unnecessary to boys like urinals that have such a greater cost over period products? Schools will refuse to pay for period products but will go out of there way to support cis men. Many people who have periods can't afford period products and just have to use something unsanitary, or hope that one of their friends or trusted adults will have menstrual products and that is why I feel like schools should pay for the materials that we need.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:30:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Kagiwada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair and the House Committee on Finance,

Thank you for allowing my to testify in SUPPORT of SB2821 Relating to Menstrual Equality.

Please pass this bill post-haste to keep menstruating students in school and learning. Students who can not afford period products are at a distinct disadvantage in our schools and classrooms through no fault of their own and we should do everything we can to fix this problem.

Mahalo, -Jenn Kagiwada, Hilo HI

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:32:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charley Wilkinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Charley and I am a resident of Kaka‘ako. I am writing today to share my strong support of **SB2821**, which would make period products free in all public and charter schools.

It is my beleif that if we want to support the wellbeing and academic success of young people in our community, we must be providing free period products to all students. Without access to basic sanitation supplies, young people are needlessly suffering emotional, physical, and financial distress while under our care in public and charter school settings.

Let's take care of our students by removing barriers to the supplies and education they need manage their health.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill,

Charley Wilkinson

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:33:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Argueta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Kyle Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Kevin Argueta and I work at Kahakai Elementary School and am a resident of Honaunau, District 5. I am testifying in support of HB2821 SD2 bill because I believe it is a fundamental right that our students have access to these resources. From data collected by the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women report, "Understanding Period Poverty in Hawaii Report," it is clear that this is an issue affecting our communities, specifically our most vulnerable and rural communities like the one I work and reside.

This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity and end period poverty that requires low investment. Statewide statistics a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products. Furthermore, there is evidence in our islands that students are using period products beyond the recommended safe time, resorting to unhygienic alternatives and missing school because they cannot afford to purchase products in school or at home. The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support for this bill.

Mahalo,

Kevin Argueta

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:34:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eva Louise McCoy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello legislators, My name is Eva McCoy I am an 8th grader at ilima intermediate school and I support SB2821 SD2. Period poverty is a big thing everywhere and it is really bad because students with periods and not many supplies would rather miss school than go to school while menstruating. I think that this bill should be passed to have the period products provided. And when this happened other places attendance improved by 4%.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:43:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Lalagos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We know that many things can disrupt the learning process, but having the proper supplies to manage menstruation should not be one of them. In a study commissioned by "Always" it was noted that 1 in 5 girls have left school early or missed the day entirely because they did not have the proper supplies. Additionally, "State of the Period 2021" indicated that 23% of students have struggled to afford period products. If we are committed to equity then it is imperative that we ensure that all students are able to be in school every day and are not hampered by lack of access to essential supplies.

I am a teacher in a public school and have many stories of times students came to me asking for pads or tampons because they do not have them. I keep some of these supplies in my classroom because as a menstruating person I can recall times I didn't have what I needed or was taken by surprise and the feelings of shame and embarrassment.

We provide for so many needs of our students, but consider this something unimportant or even unmentionable. I can't help but wonder if this impacted all students, just like hunger or access to technology, if we would have solved this a long time ago. The lack of access to period products, and therefore consistent access to an equitable education, is a clear demonstration of gender based exclusion and oppression.

We must support menstrual equity and therefore equitable access to an education by supporting SB2821. Our lack of inaction will signal to our community and future generations that we do not value the education of all our students.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:45:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rozlyn Calderon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Committee on Finance

Hearing Date/Time: Friday., April 1, 2022, 3PM

Re: Testimony Supporting SB2821

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rozlyn Calderon, I am the Regional Field Organizer for Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates Hawai'i writing today to urge you to support SB2821. Expanding accessibility to menstrual products is a critical step to advance equity in our schools. Providing health care in all educational settings is a powerful way to ensure generations of young adults are empowered to plan for their futures and lead healthier lives.

Additionally the lack of access to period products is a clear form of gender-based exclusion and oppression. Period products are vital for the physical and mental health, well-being and full participation of menstruators, including but not limited to girls, women, transgender and nonbinary individuals. Failure to consider period needs is a form of sex-based discrimination that disproportionately affects menstruators.

Please support SB2821 and expand accessibility to menstrual products for our keiki. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for hearing this important bill.

Sincerely,

Rozlyn Calderon

Regional Field Organizer PPAA HI

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:46:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Mae Rayoan	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

As a student that has a menstrual cycle, I have experienced a time in my life where I suddenly got my period and there were no other students with extra pads. I felt terrible because I didn't know what to do. That day, I chose to go home because of how terrible I felt. I believe that teenagers or people who experience something that is inevitable for them, shouldn't stop them from going to school. If there were extra pads that were offered on my campus I would probably finished up my math class that day.

Ronnie N. Inagaki
41-238 Huli Street
Waimānalo, Hawai'i 96795

March 31, 2022

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY RONNIE N. INAGAKI
ON SENATE BILL NO. 2821, S.D. 2

TO: House Committee on Education
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Chair
Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Water & Land
Representative David Tarnas, Chair
Representative Patrick Pihana Branco, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: APRIL 2, 2022
TIME: 3:00 PM

Aloha kākou:

My name is Ronnie Inagaki, I am strongly in support of SB2821 SD2.

Schools should realize that [menstruation] isn't a choice. And if they want to support menstruating citizens, they should do the bare minimum and make sure that public- and state-funded places have period products that people can use.

Menstrual products should be treated in the same way you treat restocking toilet paper. It's a medical necessity and therefore, it shouldn't be hindered by conversations about cost, but treated as something that needs to be addressed.

One of the major reasons why it is important for schools to provide menstrual supplies is because, for many, periods can come unexpectedly. When one starts their period, without access to the necessary supplies, and it is more likely that those in middle and high school are going to be lacking access to supplies if their period arrives unexpectedly.

Another reason, lack of access to menstrual supplies can have an impact on education. Without access to supplies, students often miss class or do not participate as vigorously for fear of leakage and embarrassment. Fear of period leakage prevents students from being able to focus in class and that can overall impact educational outcomes. Without shame and fear, students have more opportunity to be successful in school, which is always a plus.

The lack of adequate access to menstrual products is an issue that impacts women throughout the world, and it is a serious issue. If schools were to provide free access to menstrual supplies, it would be a huge step forward in achieving menstrual equality. For these reasons I request this committee to please adopt SB2821 SD2.

Mahalo,
Ronnie N. Inagaki
Rinagaki69@gmail.com

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:49:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Russo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Russo and I'm a teacher at James Campbell High School. I'm writing in **support** of Senate Bill 2821 SD2. It's important to provide students with menstraul products to minimize potential disruptions to learning.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Christine Russo

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 2:52:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avery Olson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear legislators,

I am currently an OBGYN in Hawaii, but most of all, I am a woman. I remember what it was like at menarche, the feelings of confusion and shame. I was fortunate enough to have access to menstrual products, and cannot imagine how my feelings around menarche would have been exacerbated if I did not. Funding menstrual products in schools is something that benefits all Wahine. It would benefit my cousins on Oahu, my future patients in Hilo, and the girls I have not yet met in Lihue. Menstrual products are expensive, and equity is access for all.

This bill should be supported by all of those who support Wahine. Please Support SB2821.

Thank you,
Dr. Avery Olson

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Silva Luke, Chair

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Thursday, March 31, 2022

Written Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education in support of SB 2821 SD2

Aloha Honorable Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Kelsey Nakagawa, and I am a 20 year old student attending the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and a Kāne'ohe resident. I am writing in support of SB2821 SD2, and I am grateful for the opportunity to testify on behalf of myself and my community. As a female student and menstrator, I kindly ask you all to support providing free period products in all public schools.

When I was in sixth grade I got my period for the first time. Fortunately, I was panicking alone in the bathroom stall without any period products on me. I quickly unraveled toilet paper and wrapped it around my underwear and went to class with feet of bundled, wet toilet paper between my legs. I was too embarrassed to ask anyone for a spare pad, and I felt self-conscious and alone. By the end of the day bits of toilet paper were shredded and colored red, stuck to my legs and underwear. I remember feeling dirty and foolish for trying toilet paper.

For the rest of middle school I was ashamed to be on my period and I hid that I was on my period and when I was changing my pads. If I leaked I walked to the bathroom with my eyes glued to the floor and my hands over my butt to cover the spot of blood. Offering free period products in school would have helped me on the days I did not have period products. Additionally, providing free period products and addressing period poverty can decrease period stigma and encourage menstrators to embrace their body on and off their periods. Thank you all again for your time and consideration. I will deeply appreciate it if the House Committee on Finance supports SB 2821 SD2.

Mahalo nui,



Kelsey Nakagawa

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:23:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa W. Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

First, I would like to thank the Finance Committee for hearing this bill. I write in strong support SB2821 SD2 asking the Dept of Education to provide free period products on all public and charter campuses. I feel passionate about supporting this measure and I know how imperative it is to address the issue of period poverty, especially how it effects our youth. Providing products at schools and eliminating even one angle of period poverty will help bring us as a community a step closer to closing the gender inequalities gap. It has been shown in many states including on surveys in the state of Hawaii, taken across islands, that almost 1/2 of menstruating students have missed multiple days of school due to lack of resourses and product to manage their menstrual cycles. Even more have left school repeatedly (cycles happen every single month!) because of accidents or to acquire products from home, even more still yet miss or leave school from feeling embarrassed or ashmaed. This in and of itself means menstruating students, females, will be at an academic disadvantage, simply because of a normal biological process of being female. We can help this.

This bill is important to address and remedy this inequality. Secondly, schools are expected, and do, provide products for basic hygeine and normal bodily functions, such as toilet paper, bandaides, soap etc... considering about half of the students at any school are in need of period products every three weeks or so, this is a huge need that is being overlooked. I said "need" not "want". These are basic needs.

As females, menstruating people, we have all had an embarrassing moment when we've had to use something other than an 'approved product', and had a problem. Its not an isolated event. I lived through having my make shift roll of toilet paper 'pad' tumble out of my pant leg in the hallway between classes, I was in high school. Talk about wanting to disappear... But, I made due as many girls still do. I cannot imagine the possible repercussions someone may experience now with social media and a camera in everyone's hand!

Access to Education on this subject, is paramount. students, teachers, and parents. This movement starts the conversation. Thank you for giving me time to share my story. I respectfully ask you to support SB 2821 SD2 and take the first steps to end period poverty on campuses statewide.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:30:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I stand in **STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2821** and strongly encourage you to pass this important legislation to provide **FREE** period products in the schools. As a member of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, this issue is very important to me and to all parents of girls across the state who must purchase period products every single month. They are very expensive and this bodily function adds such unnecessary economic burdens to girls and parents of girls.

I am so grateful that this bill has made it so far, let's push forward to the final conclusion and make this a reality!!

Mahalo for your support.

Peace and love,
Stacey Moniz

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:52:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Farrah-Marie Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee on Finance,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB2821, SD2 relating to menstrual equity. Although a member of the Hawaii County Committee on the Status of Women and the University of Hawaii Commission on the Status of Women, as well as serving as the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the testimony I provide today is in my personal capacity as a lifelong resident and citizen of Hawaii Island.

It continues to be heartwarming to read the pages of testimony submitted for SB2821 throughout this legislative session and I am grateful that your committee has agreed to hear this important bill. It is clear that the issue of period poverty is real here in Hawaii. Parents do not choose the gender of their child and children who are born female are not asked at puberty if they wish to menstruate or not. Women do not have the choice the opt-out of having their period each month. These are some of the fundamental facts of life for women. The physical, psychological and social burdens of having to deal with menstruation once a month are challenging enough. Adding the financial burden to this can make it unsurmountable, especially for families who are already suffering to make ends meet during extremely difficult economic times.

While the financial cost of this measure appears to be a major sticking point for those who support the intent of this bill and offer comments for consideration, it should be noted that not all female students will seek out this service if and when made available on school campuses across the state, not initially anyways. The stigma attached to menstruating and not having adequate resources will need to be addressed before some students will build the confidence to seek assistance. Additionally, those who are able to afford their own products, may and likely will continue to do so. Through an equity lens, this bill attempts to level some of the field that our young women are having to navigate during already tumultuous times of their lives. This bill attempts to remove a financial barrier and increase access to a necessity for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Please join others around Hawai'i who are contributing resources to this worthy cause. In December 2021, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo Student Association (student government) approved up to \$32,200 for the purchase of supplies in support of their UH Hilo Menstrual Equity project that would provide feminine hygiene products for UH Hilo students in need. Last month, the Hawai'i County Committee on the Status of Women approved \$2,400 for the

purchase of feminine hygiene products to help some of the local high schools be able to start providing these products to young women at their schools.

Your support of young women across our entire state is recognized and greatly appreciated. I kindly ask for your vote in support of this measure. It carries a much larger message about gender equity, so much so that entire communities are mobilized around and behind you to assist in moving this effort forward.

Mahalo,

Farah-Marie Gomes, Ph.D.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 4:19:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Toyama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a retired teacher and high school counselor, I would like to submit testimony in favor of menstrual equality. As the Immediate Past President of the Hawaii Buddhist Womens' Associations, I would like to say that we worked with the NAACP to collect these items for women over Martin Luther KING, Jr. Day. Systemic support for this effort to get menstrual products to students would be invaluable.

Lois Toyama

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:10:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and members,

We (Myself, Dem Women's Caucus and AAUW Hawai`i) are in strong support of this measure. As we have previously testified on the substance of the bill we will not repeat here. But we urge the Finance Committee to accept the Senate Committee's recommendation to fund this measure at one million dollars.

Mahalo,

Ann S. Freed

Member AAUW Hawai`i

Member Hawai`i State Democratic Women's Caucus.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 9:46:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shereen Doi Acorda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Shereen Doi Acorda and I am Social Worker. I am writing in strong support of bill SB2821 requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public and charter school campuses.

Period products are health hygiene products. Menstruation is a bodily function that is just as important as other bodily functions. People with periods cannot simply "opt out" of having their periods.

- Student well-being is at risk. Students surveyed reported using leaves, school paper, diapers, old rags, newspaper, and socks when they do not have period products. These items are not sanitary, and using them opens up the possibility of (possibly lethal) infection that is preventable!
- Menstrual inequity leads to educational inequity. Students report missing classes or even entire school days due to a lack of access to period products on campus.

I strongly urge this committee to pass bill SB2821 to ensure equity and dignity to menstruating students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2821-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 8:46:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara O'Rourke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 2821.

My name is Sara O'Rourke and I am a teacher at Kapaa High School on Kauai. Providing menstrual products at school will remove barriers to education for students who do not have access to menstrual products at home.

In addition, sometimes students just don't have menstrual products with them at school. Just recently, I know that one of my students got signed out to go home because she got her period during the school day and did not have any pads or tampons with her. She missed a whole day of learning. If the menstrual products were available at school, she would have been able to stay in school for the day. All of the small incidents like this add up over time and many students have lost out on valuable teaching instruction.

Let's do our part to normalize menstruation, provide equal access, and have menstruation products available at school. Please vote in support of Senate Bill 2821. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.