

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KEITH A. REGAN  
COMPTROLLER  
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN  
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ**  
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF  
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE COMMITTEES ON  
  
GOVERNMENT OPERATION  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FEBRUARY 7, 2023, 9:00 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 309 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

S.B. 891

RELATING TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS.

Chairs McKelvey and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Aquino, and Members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill (S.B.) 891, which requires the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) to provide menstrual products at no cost in specified restrooms of public buildings maintained by DAGS.

DAGS understands the importance of the availability of feminine hygiene products at designated DAGS-managed building restrooms. DAGS Central Services (CSD) will collaborate with DAGS Public Works Division (PWD) to determine the appropriate physical locations of the dispensers in each restroom to meet building code, safety, health, and accessibility requirements. Our team looks forward to working with stakeholders on implementation.

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

**COUNTY COUNCIL**

Mel Rapozo, Chair  
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair  
Addison Bulosan  
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.  
Felicia Cowden  
Bill DeCosta  
Luke A. Evslin



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk  
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188  
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349  
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

**Council Services Division**  
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209  
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

February 6, 2023

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN  
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON  
SB 891, RELATING TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Tuesday, February 7, 2023  
3:50 p.m.  
Conference Room 225  
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair McKelvey, Chair San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong SUPPORT of SB 891, Relating to Menstrual Products. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a Councilmember of the Kaua'i County Council.

This measure intends to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in specified restrooms of public buildings maintained by that department. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support the intent of this measure as it is long overdue and I look forward to seeing this being accomplished.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 891. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

**ADDISON BULOSAN**  
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AAO:mn



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The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii  
Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Honorable Chair Angus McKelvey  
Honorable Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Committee Members

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Honorable Chair Joy San Buenaventura  
Honorable Vice Chair Henry Aquino  
Committee Members

Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 3:50 pm

**RE: Support for SB891 - Relating to Menstrual Products in Public Buildings Maintained by the Department of Accounting and General Services**

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Dear Chair McKelvey, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs, and members of the Committee,

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i **strongly supports SB891**, which serves to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in specified restrooms of public buildings maintained by that department and appropriates funds. We request an amendment to the bill to place signage in all restrooms of those covered public buildings to indicate the location of free menstrual products.

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 menstrual health education, feelings of societal shame or stigma surrounding menstruation, and inadequate access to a clean facilities to maintain proper hygiene. We recognize the all-encompassing societal challenges inherent in tackling the broader issue of period poverty and menstrual inequity that disproportionately affects students, low-income and houseless girls and women, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals, and those that are incarcerated.

Menstruation is a natural monthly occurrence experienced by over half the population, and an estimated [630,000](#) menstruators in the State of Hawai'i, for much of their lives. Yet, negative socio-cultural stigmas associated with menstruation have left many people that experience menstruation feel shame and without access to resources. Menstruation should not be treated differently from any other basic bodily function and menstrual products are instrumental to the general health and welfare of those who menstruate. In fact, the [American Medical Association \(AMA\)](#) adopted new policies in 2021 that recognizes the adverse physical and mental health consequences of limited access to menstrual products, and seeks to increase their availability in the workplace and schools.

With that being said, free menstrual products are necessary in our state public buildings because they serve the people of Hawai‘i and have long provided a safety net for some of our most vulnerable populations. Last year, while we were advocating for free menstrual products in all Hawai‘i public and charter schools, we worked with the Senate to install dispensers that provide menstrual products for free in the Hawai‘i State Capitol bathrooms on their side. We have anecdotal evidence that these dispensers helped menstruators who were caught off guard or unprepared at the start of their period and are welcomed by many in the Capitol.

Further 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 menstrual products at home. Such disruptions cost considerable time and resources. Oftentimes, menstruators also suffer through humiliating menstrual moments in public, like bleeding through their clothes or on chairs, which adversely affect their productivity, attention, and social emotional well-being. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products ensures more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities and reduces barriers faced by visitors to state buildings. Just as the Women’s Legislative Caucus led the change to provide diaper changing stations to make it easier for families visiting the Capitol in both men’s and women’s bathrooms, we want to meet the needs and protect the dignity of all menstruating people.

Since menstruators do not have the option to cease their period or flow, menstrual products should be deemed essential. We regulate and ensure toilet paper and paper towels are available in restrooms to meet basic needs for health and sanitation, and menstrual products are no different. It is well-established in research and our own statewide data that when menstruators have limited access to resources during menstruation, they seek other coping methods. This includes but is not limited to the practice of using unsafe and potentially harmful alternatives, like leaves, paper towels, and socks, using menstrual products beyond the recommended time, or going with none at all. As a result, menstruators face potential medical issues including preventable infections that make them susceptible to cervical cancer, infertility, and toxic shock syndrome, which are serious and can result in death. It’s a public health concern and unhygienic not to have access to menstrual products, no less so than lack of access to toilet paper.

Lastly, the free provision of menstrual products in public buildings alleviates the burden of period poverty. Menstrual products are becoming economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals in our State. We are aware from the [Alice in Hawai‘i: 2022 Fact and Figures report](#) that the number of Hawai‘i households that are struggling to make ends meet reached a new high in 2022, at 44% households. Equally concerning, 15% of households have income below the federal poverty level, which represented a sharp increase from 9% in 2018. According to recent data in the past month from the [Household Pulse Survey](#), 64% of local households report difficulties paying for usual household expenses and 61% reporting difficulties are biologically female.

We know from our work that those struggling to meet basic needs are likely to be the same individuals impacted by period poverty. The [2021 report conducted by Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma’i Movement Hawai‘i](#) revealed the extent of the issue in the state. The exceptionally high cost of living and wage gap for women specifically exacerbate period poverty in Hawai‘i. 90% of respondents believe menstrual products are expensive and nearly 30% of respondents reported that they or someone in their household experienced difficulty obtaining menstrual products, of which cost was the

most cited reason. Menstruation also impacts participation in daily activities with half of respondents reporting missing school or work because of it. Menstrual products are vital for the physical and mental health, well-being and full participation of menstruators. Failure to consider period needs is a form of sex-based discrimination that disproportionately affects menstruators.

There is growing support nationally and globally for expanded access to free menstrual products. Scotland became the first country in the world to pass legislation in 2020 that offers menstrual products free of charge to anyone who needs them. Congresswoman Grace Meng (D-NY) introduced sweeping legislation to address menstrual needs in the federal bill [H.R. 3614 - Menstrual Equity For all Act of 2021](#). In the past two years, [Ann Arbor](#), [Austin](#), and [Washington DC](#) have passed legislation to make menstrual products free and available in state facilities, with other states, like [California](#), pursuing similar legislation.

We urge you to support **SB891** and welcome you to contact us with any additional questions you may have. Mahalo for your leadership and service to Hawai'i!

Me ke aloha,

Nikki-Ann Yee  
Co-Founder & President  
Ma'i Movement Hawai'i



February 5, 2023

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair  
Committee on Health & Human Services

Re: SB891 - RELATING TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 225  
350PM, 2/07/2023

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and committee members,

**On behalf of the Aloha Diaper Bank, We write in support of SB891, to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in the absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restroom.**


This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people,


Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers face by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote gender menstrual equity in the State

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB891 and respectfully request the committee to support this measure.

Thank you,

  
Anne Komatsu,  
Executive Director

  
Catherine Kerch,  
Director of Programs & Operations

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/2/2023 6:33:44 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Testifying for Rainbow Family 808	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Rainbow Family 808 strongly supports SB891. Please pass this bill.

Mike Golojuch, Sr., Secretary/Board Member

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/3/2023 8:22:14 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Golojuch Jr	Testifying for Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

The Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i; Hawai‘i’s oldest and largest policy and political LGBTQIA+ focused organization supports SB 891.

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





**To: Committee Government Operations and Committee on Health and Human Services**

**Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday February 7, 2023 3:50PM**

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB 891**

**From: Heather Lusk, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center**

Dear Chair McKelvy, Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) supports SB 891 which would maintain a stock of menstrual products free of charge in certain public buildings in the restrooms.

HHRC's mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities.

HHRC's clients are predominately houseless, and they often struggle to have the hygiene products they need and having more access in public buildings such as libraries, parks and other public spaces. Additionally, these products are expensive and anyone struggling with poverty may be challenged to purchase and yet without these products, people struggle with embarrassment and shame. This is particularly true of our transgender and gender-non-conforming community who would also benefit from this bill because of the requirement to be placed in male bathrooms as well. This bill will ensure that all people who need menstrual products will have access.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Heather Lusk, Executive Director, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 10:42:31 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Velika Yasay	Testifying for PERIOD The Menstrual Movement	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Testify Via Zoom

Melissa W. Chong, Owner of Zen Den Midwifery. Certified Professional Midwife, Licensed Midwife, community health advocate, wife, Mom of four kids, and passionate advocate for the community.

Thank you to the Government services Committee and Health and Human Services Committee for hearing SB891 'Relating to Menstrual Products'. I write in strong **SUPPORT of SB891**. Period Poverty is a real issue seen here in Hawai'i. Correcting this is within our control. Access to products and education for employers and educators, go hand in hand, this movement starts the conversation.

Thank you for giving me time to share my testimony. On behalf of Zen Den Midwifery, I respectfully ask you to support SB891 and take the next step to addressing period poverty.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 12:40:27 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Taylor Robinson	Testifying for HI Student Care Resources	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

On behalf of my organization, today to strongly support SB891 because as a student and menstruator myself, I know how important it is to have these readily available for all students.

There have been many instances where I've forgotten my own products or felt ashamed or in too much pain to ask anyone to use theirs. having these available in all school will not only benefit students of all ages but help those who can not afford to buy their own and others who don't attend school because of this. This will create a more comfortable and clean school environment.

I hope you can take my words to heart as I am a STUDENT reaching out to you and addressing that this is something that would really benefit us. Thank you!

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 12:29:39 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joanne Okika Shigeke Qina`au	Testifying for Pilina Center for Wellbeing	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai -

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

Having access to these products signals to our citizens and youth that their reproductive cycles are simply a part of life. Passing this bill signals that individuals are supported by a compassionate system - people of many identities (e.g., male, female, mahu, two-spirit, nonbinary) menstruate, so having the products available in all bathrooms is critical.

Further, it's common that menstruating people feel ostracized or belittled simply because our bodies have the power to generate new life within. I went through that as a child, and so have many thousands of other menstruating folks. Especially where adolescents and young adults are concerned, the embarrassment of bleeding through one's clothing can be devastating. Taking these measures protects people from going through that unnecessary shame.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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



## Hawaii Women's Coalition

**TO:** Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Honorable Chair Angus McKelvey  
Honorable Vice Chair Mike Gabbard  
Committee Members

Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Honorable Chair Joy San Buenaventura  
Honorable Vice Chair Henry Aquino  
Committee Members

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 3:50 pm

**FROM:** Hawai'i Women's Coalition

**RE:** **Support for SB891** - Relating to Menstrual Products in Public Buildings  
Maintained by the Department of Accounting and General Services

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs, 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 SB891**. The free provision of menstrual products is vital for ensuring the health, dignity, and full participation of menstruators. A [national study](#) commissioned by Free the Tampon found that 86% of people who menstruate have started their periods unexpectedly in public, and 79% have had to improvise a tampon or pad out of toilet paper or something else. Women, māhū, trans men, gender non conforming and non-binary people who menstruate deserve to have their basic needs met.

Local data from the [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) explored the extent of period poverty and menstrual inequity in the state. 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**. 84.7% believe menstrual equity is a real problem, like food and housing insecurity.



## Hawaii Women's Coalition

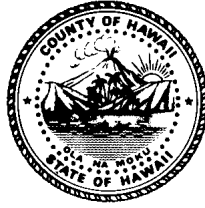
By providing menstrual products in state buildings, Hawai‘i helps ensure those who menstruate have equal access to public facilities, irrespective of their gender or economic status.

**SB891** is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity in Hawai‘i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, and gender equality for girls, and transgender and non-binary people. For all of these reasons, the Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition is pleased to support **SB891**. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition

**Jennifer Kagiwada**  
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272  
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: February 6, 2023

TO: Senate Committees on Government Operations and Health and Human Services

FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member  
Council District 2

SUBJECT: SB 891

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

This bill is an initiative to take steps to help address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, mitigating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people.

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

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenn Kagiwada'.

Jenn Kagiwada



**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/4/2023 5:17:03 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shandhini Raidoo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB 891. I am a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist and the vast majority of my patient require menstrual products. These can be difficult for many people to afford, and worrying about having enough products or bleeding while away from home can impact people's mental health and their ability to participate in their community. Having menstrual products readily available at no cost in public places will alleviate much of this stress and allow people to go about their lives with dignity.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Shandhini Raidoo, MD, MPH

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 11:48:16 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill to make free menstrual products available in certain locations.

This is long overdue!

Barbara J. Service MSW (ret.)

Child Welfare Supervisor

Kupuna Advocate

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/3/2023 5:08:33 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
M. Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote to support SB891.

TO: Members of the Committees Government Operations & Health and Human Services

FROM: Natalie Iwasa  
808-395-3233

HEARING: 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 7, 2023

SUBJECT: SB 891, Free Menstrual Products in State Buildings - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chairs McKelvey and San Buenaventura and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 891, which would authorize the Department of Accounting and General Services to put free menstrual products in state-owned buildings such as libraries.

First, let's all understand that these products would not be "free."

**Second, no, just no. Just vote "no."**

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/4/2023 11:58:03 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brittney Hedlund	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms. I support this because I was just at the capital yesterday and there were no free period products whatsoever in every restroom I visited.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/4/2023 12:14:12 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nicelle Herron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe that all period products should be available and tax free to those who need them. It is incredibly helpful for those without financial security to have access but also, as much as you try to track, flows can be inconsistent. It is important to provide access for when something happens. If not, it can lead to having to leave work or school early, missing out on pay and important pieces of information, not to mention the shame and embarrassment that gets added.

Dear Senate Committee on Health and Human Services (chair Joy San Buenaventura) and Senate Committee on Government Operations (Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey), and the rest of the committee members,

My name is Sarah Combs and I am currently a fourth year PhD at the University of Hawai'i Mānoa. I am testifying today to support Senate Bill 891 "Relating to Menstrual Products" that would require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide free menstrual products in bathrooms in public buildings. I also support the clause in this bill that recognizes the importance of including gender diverse individuals as potential recipients of this program, and thus including gender neutral bathrooms as well as at least one men's restroom in the building as locations for menstrual products. This will promote equity for all people who menstruate, regardless of their gender expression.

Pads and tampons are a basic need for people who menstruate. I can't even begin to count the number of times throughout my life where I have been in public and found myself without the necessary supplies, and just had to hope that I would not bleed through my clothes until I could get home or to a store. Having supplies in public bathrooms would be helpful in reducing some of that anxiety and shame. Some public bathrooms will have machines that you can buy a pad or tampon for a quarter, but in this day and age, I don't know many people my age who carry around loose change. Menstrual products are expensive: the CVS in my neighborhood sells 16 tampons for \$7.00 and typically, I use at least two boxes every cycle, sometimes three. This is more than I spend on toilet paper per month. As a graduate student, menstrual supplies are expensive – but are something that I can afford and will choose to prioritize using my money because it is as important as toilet paper or other hygiene supplies. However, having worked in homelessness for a number of years prior to going back to school, I know that for some of my clients, having access to menstrual products is a luxury. They would have to choose between buying expensive menstrual products with the little money they had, or other basic necessities for survival. This is not a choice that anyone should have to make. There are all sorts of programs that provide basic needs for people who are struggling: food pantries, drop-in centers, emergency shelters, even public water fountains. This is because people recognize the importance of ensuring that basic needs are met. Menstrual products are also basic needs.

At this point I would like to strongly reiterate my support for SB891 and the importance of promoting menstrual equity across the state. This bill will help to provide equitable and inclusive access to all menstruating people, and likely reduce stress and anxiety about menstruating when in public. This is not a topic that many people I know feel comfortable talking about, but I would guess that most people who have menstruated in their lives, have had a situation where they have been in public and either leaked or been afraid of leaking. This is panic inducing and stressful. This bill would help to alleviate some of that stress while promoting equity on a wider community scale. I strongly support this bill and recommend the committee to put it forth to the next stage towards implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Combs

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/4/2023 4:52:51 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brenna Palmer-Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Women should be provided with access to necessary menstruation products. We do not control what happens to our bodies and it is a natural occurrence. Adding taxes as well as the cost makes these products often unaffordable and they are usually inconvenient to access.



**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 891, RELATING TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS.

**DATE:** February 4, 2023

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Via Videoconference

**TESTIFIER:** Keopu'u Napoleon-Ahn

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Thompson School of Social Work, and I strongly support SB891. Girls and women deserve improved accessibility to accessible menstruation products.

Hawai'i has the nation's highest living costs. Due to growing costs and stagnating wages, State families struggle financially. As a result, when essentials for health and well-being have to be prioritized based on a hierarchy, necessities like food, water, and shelter are given precedence, and menstrual hygiene becomes secondary despite its equivalency. When girls and women lack clean facilities and cannot buy menstrual health products to meet their monthly demands, they are at a higher risk of physical and mental health risks. When free menstrual products are readily available in public buildings, physical and mental health risks will decrease, thus alleviating period poverty.

Hawai'i's already high living cost further exacerbates period poverty. More research and engagement are needed to address this public health issue adequately.

Mahalo,

Keopu'u Napoleon-Ahn

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/4/2023 7:51:53 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Joy San Buenaventura & Vice Chair Henry Aquino & Members of the HHS Committee, and Honorable Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey & Vice Chair Mike Gabbard & Members of the Government Operations,

My name is Airabella Molina and I am a recent graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa with my BA in Public Health with a minor in Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies. I am a resident of the Kaneohe/Kahaluu district. I am very passionate about Period Poverty in Hawaii.

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this because I have witnessed Period Poverty firsthand. Family and friends of mine have struggled with the inability to access menstrual products due to lack of income, education, cultural or societal shame, or sanitary places to maintain hygiene. Period Poverty is a huge issue in Hawai‘i and is a pressing public health concern. In Hawaii, it was reported that the most common barrier when experiencing period poverty was cost (by a survey conducted in 2021 by Ma’i Movement Hawai’i). This made me passionate about ending Period Poverty in Hawai’i along with Ma’i Movement.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 8:13:55 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle Sato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

I support this because I believe that menstrual products are a necessity as are toilet paper, soap, and water in a restroom.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 10:04:09 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Danielle Sato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Danielle Sato, and I am currently a medical student at the University of Hawai'i John A. Burns School of Medicine. I am testifying in strong support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating individuals by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

I support this because supporting access to menstruation products means supporting the rights and livelihood of women and gender-diverse individuals. Knowing that you will be able to menstruate in public without fear of ridicule, embarrassment, and a number of other social barriers makes the difference in getting to thrive at school, work, and everyday life. Growing up, going through puberty, and even now as a young adult, I have experienced firsthand countless times when I feared not having access to menstrual products, and the impact it would have on my day. Further, for those of lower socioeconomic status with more limited financial means, increased access to menstrual products is not just a matter of convenience, it is a matter of safety. In addition, this bill helps address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are an essential component of our daily lives, similar to toilet paper or hand soap, but are economically inaccessible for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

I urge the committee to support of this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 10:59:22 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stason	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB891 because this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people.

Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people

Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

Mahalo!

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 11:46:09 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Edith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support period products in state offices and colleges in Hawaii.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 12:46:17 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Gabbard and the Senate Committee on Government Operations and Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

I am in strong support of SB891. This is an important step towards menstrual equity for members of our community who cannot afford to pay for period products. No one should have to worry about being able to take care of their most basic physical needs.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 1:48:15 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shereen Doi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

Menstrual products are a basic necessity, toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Increasing the accessibility of products for all can relieve the stress and financial hardship for mensrating individuals.

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



**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 2:19:09 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaitlynn Felipe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this because I believe menstrual products are a basic necessity, toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

February 5, 2023

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

In 2021, Ma'i Movement Hawaii and the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women published a study to better understand the ways that period poverty affects the menstruators of our state. The study found that 50% of respondents had missed school or work due to their periods and that nearly 30% of respondents had difficulty obtaining period products due to various barriers including cost, knowledge, accessibility, and stigma. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs. This bill also protects the dignity of all menstruating people, increases the inclusivity of our public facilities, and promotes greater menstrual equity in the State.

Menstruation is a bodily function that is just as important as any other bodily function. It is a biological process, and people who menstruate cannot simply "opt out" of having their periods. Thus, menstrual products are a basic necessity like toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. The state currently provides soap, toilet paper, and paper towels in its bathrooms (and continues to stock them when vandalism or theft occurs) because those are basic necessities that people need to address their bodily functions. The state doesn't expect non-menstruators to carry around their own rolls of toilet paper around its buildings, yet it currently does expect menstruators to carry their own pads or tampons. This is unfair and has been the status quo for far too long. The State of Hawaii can do better, and the people of Hawaii deserve better.

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

Mahalo nui loa,  
Sarah Kern

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 4:30:56 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha GVO and HHS Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

As both a concerned citizen and public health professional, I write in strong support of SB891, which would require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this bill because it aligns with current recommendations on public health for access to reproductive services and products. According to the United Nations, menstrual equity is not only a health issue, but also a human rights concern.

(<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/06/high-commissioner-human-rights-statement-menstrual-health>)

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

As such, I urge you to pass this important measure.

With thanks,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 6:57:23 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Fuli Soa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered public building. Furthermore the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom, with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

I support this because through my work at our school family resource center I have seen how many families struggle to make ends meet. Basic necessities such as feminine products should not be inaccessible for any family. The passing of this bill will bring relief to many needy families.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 7:21:52 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Audreea E Ewing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Menstral cycles are not something we as women can control. It is an inevitable part of growing older. Some women have it easier than others and can, to some extent, track when it will happen and prepare for it in advance, however not all women are the same and even those women who can track their cycles are not always correct about the day it will come. The day a women's cycle starts can vary from being a few days off to being a few weeks off, depending on the women and the things that are happening to her body at the time. No to mention that for those who are very young, very old, or who have irregular cycles, hormonal imbalances and/or other health issues, trying to plan in advance can feel almost impossible. I can personally think of over a dozen times I've been in public and unprepared for my cycle to start and in at least half of those stories not only was I ill prepared, but I also had no means to solve my problem. I've had days where my cycle has started unexpectedly and I hadn't packed anything for it, had no money to buy anything, and/or any store that sold products was far enough away that to go there would mean ending up covered in menstrual fluid and needing to not only buy the menstrual products, but also a new pair of pants. That is why I am in support of this bill. I understand that products can not reasonably be provided in every facility as it would be difficult to manage the distribution of those products, but for those places who can, I feel it should be mandated that they provide menstrual products free of charge for those who need it. Menstrating is part of being a women and we should not be penalized for something that is beyond our control. Thank you for your time and consideration.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:45:14 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Jaworowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require DAGs to provide menstrual products at no cost in women's and gender neutral restrooms in the public buildings it controls. I teach at a community college and I've experienced firsthand the situation of women caught short in our buildings without access to menstrual products. For a while, I was spending my own money to buy tampons at Costco and bringing them in to stock one of the restrooms in my building. We don't require people to pack their own toilet paper, so why would we expect them to always have on hand the menstrual products they need to get comfortably through the day? Our honors society, Phi Theta Kappa, is currently stocking some of the restrooms on our campus, but students should not have to run from building to building to find the products they need to have a comfortable and healthy day. Please ensure that women who need period products can have access to them in every state-controlled building.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 12:14:06 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB891 as free menstrual products free of charge and available in all public spaces.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 8:33:48 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisamarie Bensman, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people.

Menstrual products are a basic necessity, toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

**I support this bill because I am a professor at a local community college and I have students who have had to miss class because they can't afford menstrual products. Obviously, this puts students' academic success at risk. In the seven years, since my department has become aware of this important issue, we've been privately funding menstrual supplies for our building's bathroom. Students' usage, feedback, and appreciation has underscored the urgent need for such supplies, particularly in underserved communities.**

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

Sincerely,

Lisamarie Bensman, Ph.D.



I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. The bill also requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restroom.

I support this because the thought of not having menstrual products available when you get your period leaves many individuals anxious, vulnerable, and exposed. I know the feeling. It is quite unfortunate that this is a true reality for most menstruating individuals, though, it's a basic fact of human existence. Such products are a basic necessity, but why are we treating them as luxury products? Why are we forced to purchase them with our own money, and be expected to have them with us at all times? Period products in public restrooms would not only help in eliminating the period poverty we often face, but it also promotes a safe environment for all menstruating individuals.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 9:05:37 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Trina Orimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs San Buenaventura and McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of SB891.

Mahalo for your care for our community!

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 9:09:16 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom a Kanaka Maoli.

I'm writing in SUPPORT of SB891.

We must support the access of all menstruating people. This bill helps to ensure this and if a covered building has no gender-neutral restroom, free products should and will be available in at least one men's restrooms.

Support SB891.

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 9:13:57 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kaleo kama'i	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Eō!

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 9:34:47 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shani Butts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 10:02:39 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Oguma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB 891 is necessary for Hawai'i to move closer towards ending period poverty. We should all have access to quality, free period products.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 10:24:03 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lauren Marumoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this because I have believe that period products are a basic need. During this current economic climate, even more menstruators are being forced to choose if they can afford necessary period products, other personal hygeine products, food, housing and transportation to/from work or school. Providing free period products in these public and state places will remove a barrier and would allow more community members to feel comfortable attending classes and sessions at these State buildings and universities.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide free menstrual products in covered restrooms within covered public buildings.

Menstrual products are a basic necessity, and can be just as important to menstruating people as toilet paper is to non-menstruating people. To the committee members who do not menstruate, I want you to imagine yourself in this situation:

*You're at a public building (the Capitol) and find yourself in desperate need to use the restroom. That greasy fast food lunch you had earlier, you immediately realize that you should have made a better choice.... You need to #2 and it cannot wait. You frantically dash into the closest public restroom and find the nearest stall, barely having enough time to finagle a toilet seat cover out of the skinny wall-hung package and place it on the toilet seat. You begin to do your business and feel an immediate sense of relief; you don't know how you would have been able to sit through the upcoming hearing for SB891 otherwise. Unfortunately, that sense of relief is short-lived and turns to panic as your eyes turn to the side and you discover that your chosen stall had run out of toilet paper. What do you do? You think about trying to improvise, and fortunately you're the only person in the restroom at the moment. With the utmost caution to protect your pants from coming in to contact with, well, you know... you waddle to the adjacent stalls in search of the desperately needed TP, only to find that they too are out. As an elected official who is known to be quick on your feet and creative, you move quickly to see if there are any paper towels by the sinks that can be used. SHUCKS, there are no paper towels, either! There is not even any leftover newspaper laying around to improvise with... your heart sinks, and you ask yourself: "what am I going to do?"*

I do not think that anybody wants to find themselves in this sort of situation. Menstrual products can be just as important as toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products. Please, let's be decent human beings and help ensure that menstruating people don't ever need to find themselves in a situation where they do not have the menstrual product that they need, at least not when they are in a public building. Passing SB891 is a simple thing that you can do to help make a big impact in the lives of people around us.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

*Breanna Zoey*

(she/they)





**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 11:06:03 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Allencastre	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

**I support this bill because I know through lived experience how hard it can be for some families or individuals to have all of the products they need within their households or the funds needed to purchase them. sometimes even a quarter is not available. experiencing poverty first-hand menstrual products were just not something that I was always able to have in stock. Sometimes it really came down to whether I choose to buy food or other necessities over products that I know I would need which caused me to have to use items like toilet paper that we know is not the safest or healthiest option for women. I would like to support an advocate now on behalf of the other youth and women experiencing this today. These products should be accessible to all regardless of whether they can afford it.**

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 11:47:43 AM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Julie Rancilio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this because I have experienced a time in public when my period started and I did not have a tampon or pad. I was going for a job interview and the stress most likely caused my period to start earlier than expected. I had to quickly try and find someone who had an extra tampon or pad to give me. Going up to strangers and asking for a menstrual product is very embarrassing and stressful. I had to ask four individuals before someone finally had an extra product. All of this happened before my job interview. What a terrible way to go into it.

We should never make any person have to do what I did. The menstrual cycle is a biological function that is not exact and providing free products in public is the right thing to do. We provide restrooms for other bodily functions, complete with toilet paper, paper towels, soap, and toilet seat covers. We don't ask the public to carry around these items in case they have to use the public restroom. They are readily available and so should menstrual products.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

Julie Rancilio

February 2, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Health & Human Services  
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senator Henry Aquino, Vice-Chair

Senate Committee on Government Operations  
Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

From: Gleniss Akamine, 808-258-1148

**Re: In support of SB891**

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Aloha

I support this because I know many households are struggling to make ends meet and the exorbitant cost of living in Hawaii has caused a huge diaspora of local families leaving their island homes. I believe that menstrual projects should be available like toilet paper. However, I believe this is also an important initiative because I have often found that many of the current vending machines are left inoperable so minimally this would help to assess and implement actual access to these basic necessities. Other progressive countries already offer period products free of charge such as Scotland, New Zealand and Kenya.

Additionally, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 12:19:30 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maddalynn Seseapasara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

To: Hawaii State Senate Committees on Health and Human Services and  
Government Operations

Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, February 7, 2023, 3:50pm

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, CR 225 & Videoconference

Re: Judith Ann Armstrong is in strong support of SB891 relating to providing free menstrual products in designated public restrooms.

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services and Government Operations committees,

I, Judith Ann Armstrong, am in strong support of SB891 relating to Menstrual Products.

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 891.

Sincerely,

Judith Ann Armstrong

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 12:46:12 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaahu Alo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in womens and gender-nuetral restrooms.

Its a basic need that should not stop students from attending classes or feel uncomfortable should they be mentrating while on campuses.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 1:30:43 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
SHARON T. NOHARA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB891 which will give free period products access in state restroom facilities. Many menstruating citizens due to cost or limited access may find difficulty in getting products when needed. Menstruating products should be classified with sanitary/hygiene products like toilet paper, soap and paper towels. It should be readily available in all restroom facilities for easy access.

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:00:51 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cynthia Texeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,**

**I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 891, which seeks to provide free menstrual products in government building restrooms.**

**Access to menstrual products is a basic necessity for half of the population, yet many individuals struggle to afford these products, leading to missed work or school and an increased risk of health problems. Providing free menstrual products in government buildings will help ensure that all individuals have access to these necessary items and can go about their daily activities without any added stress or discomfort.**

**Additionally, this bill is not only a matter of public health but also of gender equality. Women and people who menstruate often face higher costs and societal stigmas related to their periods. Providing free menstrual products in government buildings sends a message that the needs and rights of all individuals are valued and respected.**

**In conclusion, I strongly urge the committee to pass Senate Bill 891 relating to menstrual products. Please provide free menstrual products in government building restrooms and beyond. This bill will improve the health, well-being, and equality of individuals who menstruate and make government buildings more inclusive and accessible for all.**

**Thank you for your consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Cindy Texeira**



**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:20:57 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kainani Wagner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,**

**I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 891, relating to the provision of free menstrual products in government building restrooms.**

**As a resident of Hawaii, I believe it is important for our government to prioritize the health and well-being of all individuals, regardless of their financial status. Providing free menstrual products in government buildings is a crucial step in ensuring that individuals who menstruate have access to the necessary hygiene products during their period.**

**Furthermore, offering free menstrual products can also help reduce the stigma surrounding menstruation and encourage open discussions about menstrual health. This will go a long way in promoting menstrual hygiene and reducing the number of girls missing school due to lack of access to menstrual products.**

**I strongly believe that SB 891 will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of individuals who menstruate in Hawaii and I urge the Legislature to support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Kainani Wagner**

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:27:28 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Aulani Wagner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,**

**I am writing to express my support for SB 891, relating to menstrual products.**

**As a woman, I have personally experienced the inconvenience and embarrassment of unexpectedly needing menstrual products and not having them readily available. Providing these products for free in government buildings would ensure that all individuals, regardless of their financial status, have access to the necessary hygiene products during their period. This is a basic necessity and a right that should be afforded to everyone.**

**In addition, the provision of free menstrual products can also help reduce the stigma surrounding menstruation and encourage open discussions about menstrual health. This will go a long way in promoting menstrual hygiene and reducing the number of people missing school due to lack of access to menstrual products.**

**I strongly believe that SB 891 will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of individuals who menstruate and I urge the Committee to support this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Aulani Wagner**

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 2:49:23 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Napualokelani Kamakele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

I support this because growing up in Nanakuli, there were times our 'ohana couldn't afford basic products and it is damaging as a child.

In addition, this bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity by reducing health risks, alleviating the burden of period poverty, and protecting the dignity of all menstruating people. Menstrual products are a basic necessity akin to toilet paper, hand soap, and other personal hygiene products, but are economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products would help to ensure more inclusive and equitable access to public facilities, reduce barriers faced by visitors to state buildings meeting basic needs, and promote greater menstrual equity in the State.

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

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 3:25:06 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cara Chaudron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura and Chair McKelvey, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men’s restroom with signage in the remaining men’s restrooms.

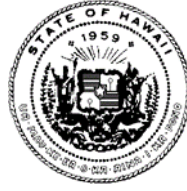
As a person who has experience needing menstrual products, I very strongly support having menstrual products available in every public bathroom regardless of the setting or the gender of the bathroom. **I am a public middle school teacher, and my multi-grade, multi-gendered students and I discussed all the following reasons why this bill is important to us:**

- 1) Menstrual products are a **necessity like all other hygiene products**, so people should have access to menstrual products regardless of their gender identity. We have access in public restrooms to all other hygiene products such as soap & toilet paper, so we should have access to menstrual products in the same way.
- 2) When there are menstrual products are provided in bathrooms for a cost, that requires people to carry change on them in the bathroom, which is rarely the case. Also not everyone can afford to spend money on these products, which makes this an equity issue as well. This bill would make bathrooms more inclusive for everyone, regardless of gender and socioeconomic status. Additionally, as an added benefit, having these products in bathrooms won't hurt anybody who doesn't need it. In fact, it may even help to educate all folks about menstrual equity.
- 3) Our school has already seen the benefits of us having menstrual products available in our bathrooms, and we believe extending this solution to all public restrooms is a strong idea that would make a very big difference in our society.
- 4) Menstrual cycles are not always regular and not all folks menstruate. Therefore, menstruators should not have to carry the burden of making sure to always have menstrual products on them when they are out and about or going to the bathroom. Providing menstrual products for free in all public restrooms would ease this burden on menstruators and help to equalize the current menstrual inequities.

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

Dr. Cara Chaudron (with support from many students in my middle school class)

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

**LATE**

February 6, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair  
Senate Committee on Government Operations

The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 891 – RELATING TO MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS.**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 3:50 p.m.  
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure and defers to the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) as to its implementation and needed appropriation.

**PURPOSE:** The bill's purpose is to require DAGS to provide menstrual products in state buildings that are open to the public.

DHS recognizes the critical importance of providing menstrual products, at no cost, to the public we serve in government buildings. Providing access to these products ensures individuals can access them with safety and dignity and continue their work or government business without embarrassment.

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



February 6, 2023

To: Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Senator Mike Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Government Operations, Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Senator Henry J.C. Aquino and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services

Re: **SB 891– Relating to Menstrual Products**

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and honorable members of the Committee on Government Operations & Committee on Health and Human Services -

I am the founder and president of the Hawai'i Diaper Bank (HDB), and am writing in support of **SB 891, to make period products free in state buildings.**

Like diapers, menstrual products are an essential hygiene product that should be available to all. Period poverty is not a new issue and is part of a larger socioeconomic problem. **2 in 5 people with periods have struggled to purchase period products in the past year due to lack of income.** High cost of living and no assistance for basic hygiene essentials puts added strain on all menstruators. **1 in 3 have missed work, school, or appointments due to lack of access to menstrual supplies.**

Periods are a normal part of life and access to basic essentials should not hinder those trying to be responsible functioning members of society. Knowing that period products will be readily available in state facilities will give peace of mind to many individuals across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB891. Please feel free to contact me via email with any questions or concerns.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Jessica Histo

Founder and President



[jessica@hawaiidiaperbank.org](mailto:jessica@hawaiidiaperbank.org)

**LATE**

**SB-891**

Submitted on: 2/6/2023 7:40:14 PM

Testimony for GVO on 2/7/2023 3:50:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rowena Rojo	Testifying for Windward Community College-TRIO program	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai'i State Legislature,

I, Rowena Rojo support SB 891 1000% fully. This is what this fake government should have done long time ago!

There is countless family, friends and including my very own household, struggles every month to have enough finances to purchase these hygiene products that mother nature has intended and that is naturally producing monthly menstrual cycles that we, females has no control over of. It flows naturally from our female bodies, it just comes every month, either we like it or not.

So, to purchase any sanitary menstrual products is mandatory, not a privilege. We females, need to take care of ourselves with a good and clean hygiene menstrual products.

As a single mother, raising four children and have worked 40 hours a week for the City and County of Hawai'i, I did not get paid very much. After receiving my paycheck, then paying my half of my bills and then left with \$20.00, with that last \$20.00 a month, I had no choice and use it to buy menstrual products for my daughter and I for the month, which was very sad and hurtful that I could not treat my children to anything.

And with my second paycheck I need to pay the other half of my bills and then other hygiene necessities for the home, toothpaste, soap, dish and laundry detergent, toilet tissue, and etc. and it stays goes on repeat every month of having hardly any income to spare.

So, I again, full heartedly support this SB 891 for our generation that is now and especially for those who are struggling through times like I had before, and honestly still need to purchase these mandatory menstrual hygiene products.

Sincerely,

Rowena Rojo



**LATE**

February 7, 2023

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee

My name is Courtney Hamakawa and I am a resident on the east side of the Big Island and I am testifying in support of SB891 to require the Department of Accounting and General Services to provide menstrual products at no cost in each covered restroom of each covered public building. Furthermore, the bill requires access for all menstruating people by providing products in gender-neutral restrooms and in absence of that, in at least one men's restroom with signage in the remaining men's restrooms.

As a Hawaii DOE Homeless Liaison, 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. We have to do all we can to make these already costly products less expensive and more accessible by being more readily available in more public restrooms. I urge all of you to pass this much needed bill to provide some level of relief to make these much needed period products more accessible in the public domain.

Respectfully,

Courtney Hamakawa  
DOE- East Hawaii Community Homeless Concerns Liaison