

**‘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 SCR100
March 29, 2021**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Honorable Members,

The Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women supports SCR100, which requests the Department of Education provide free menstrual products to all Hawai‘i public school campuses. Although we lack specific data, period poverty is likely to affect Hawai‘i students when more than half of the state’s public school students come from low income families.¹ If students cannot pay for basic supplies needed to cope with an involuntary bodily function like menstruation, who should? The government. Further, gender equality demands that we invest in ending the social exclusion, shame and stigma associated with period poverty.

Accordingly, the Commission asks that the Committee pass SCR100 in order to achieve equal status for girls, transgender boys, and gender non-conforming students in Hawai‘i.

Sincerely,

Khara

¹<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%20Income,-Reading%20time%3A%202&text=About%2051%20percent%20of%20the,by%20the%20Southern%20Education%20Foundation.>



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

Date: 03/30/2021

Time: 09:00 AM

Location: CR 211 & Videoconference

Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Resolution: SCR 0100 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO STUDENTS ON ALL HAWAII PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUSES.

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) offers comments on SCR 100.

This Resolution describes three distinct activities: To provide free menstrual products to students on all public school campuses, include criteria in the evaluation tool of the Superintendent based on minimizing factors of achieving true gender equity, and add three new items to the Hawaii Youth Risk Behavior Survey for high school and middle school students.

Passage of this Resolution would have a financial impact on the Department and may adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board)-approved budget. To provide menstrual products to students would require initial and long-term costs for dispensers to be installed, repaired, and generally maintained; receptacles to encourage proper disposal of menstrual products; and on-going supplies. Equipment and supplies would be necessary for 294 school campuses. Providing unlimited access to menstrual products for free (instead of for a nominal fee) may have the unintended negative consequence of clogged drains and associated plumbing costs.

The initial cost to provide free menstrual products to students at Hawaii public schools is estimated to be \$1,317,800.00 (see Table 1). The annual cost in subsequent years is estimated to be \$853,160.00 (see Table 2). In order to develop the cost estimates associated with this proposal, current public school and enrollment data were utilized as well as approximate numbers of bathrooms, stalls, and product expenses.

There are approximately 52,643 girls currently enrolled in grades 5-12 in public schools. If each girl uses two products per day for five days each month and the school year lasts ten months, it is estimated that each girl would utilize 100 products per school year. The Department has asked for

legal guidance regarding liability for toxic shock syndrome if tampons are provided to students at school. Until more information on this topic is available, only menstrual pads are being considered for distribution. One menstrual pad costs approximately \$0.14. The total cost for menstrual pads each year is estimated to be \$737,000.00.

The following numbers were used to estimate how many school bathrooms serve girls in grades 5-12 including gender neutral bathrooms: high school - 8, middle/intermediate school - 5, elementary school - 1, and other (any combination of high, middle and elementary school grade levels) - 3. The total number of bathrooms that serve girls in grades 5-12 in public schools is estimated to be 1,056 and the cost to purchase one dispenser (approximately \$400 each) for these bathrooms is \$422,400.00.

In order to encourage proper disposal of menstrual products, a waste receptacle should be installed in each bathroom stall. It is estimated that there are three stalls in each bathroom. The cost to purchase one waste receptacle (approximately \$50 each) for 3,168 bathroom stalls is \$158,400.00.

After the first year, it is anticipated that 20% of equipment will need to be replaced on an annual basis costing an estimated \$116,160.00. On-going annual expenses also include replenishing the inventory of menstrual products (\$737,000.00). A summary of costs for implementing this measure in all public schools is provided in the tables below.

Table 1. Estimated Initial Costs to Implement SCR 100 in Public Schools

Menstrual Products	Dispensers Initial	Receptacles Initial	Total Initial Cost
\$737,000.00	\$422,400.00	\$158,400.00	\$1,317,802.00

Table 2. Estimated Annual Costs to Implement SCR 100 in Public Schools

Menstrual Products	Dispensers Replacement	Receptacles Replacement	Total Annual Cost
\$737,000.00	\$84,480.00	\$31,680.00	\$853,160.00

Hawaii has administered the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in odd-numbered years from 1991 to 2019 and has tracked health trends over the course of 28 years. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is the only survey implemented in the Department that reports on teen health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and young adults, including unintentional injuries and violence, mental health and suicide, tobacco and electronic smoking device use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, weight and nutrition, physical activity, and protective factors.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is administered through a partnership between the Department, the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), and the University of Hawaii's Curriculum Research & Development Group. The Department and DOH co-facilitate the Hawaii School Health Survey Committee, which contributes to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey questionnaire development. The majority of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey questionnaire items are determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Hawaii School Health Survey Committee helps to ensure that additional items on the survey, such as those proposed relating to "period products," reflect the priorities of diverse stakeholders while maintaining the validity and reliability of the survey data and the ability to track health trends. Any Hawaii-specific survey items must be reviewed and approved by the CDC prior to the finalization of the questionnaires.

The Hawaii School Health Survey Committee is an advisory committee that includes representatives from the following offices and organizations:

- Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design
- Office of Student Support Services
- DOH Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division
- DOH Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division
- DOH Family Health Services Division
- DOH Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division
- University of Hawaii Curriculum Research & Development Group
- University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Nursing Hawaii Keiki Program
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs
- Hawaii Health Data Warehouse
- Hui for Excellence in Education

The Department respectfully defers to the Board on the process and instrument used annually to evaluate the Superintendent.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

The Hawai'i State Department of Education is committed to delivering on our promises to students, providing an equitable, excellent, and innovative learning environment in every school to engage and elevate our communities. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 9:23:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laurie Field	Testifying for Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii supports SCR 100. Thank you!

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 8:14:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Younghi Overly	Testifying for AAUW of Hawaii	Support	No

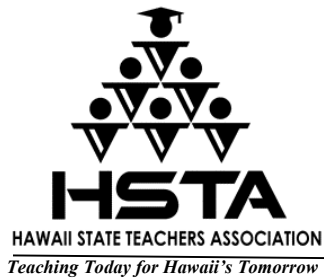
Comments:

Members of AAUW of Hawaii supports SCR100, requesting the DOE to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses. The access to menstrual products would positively impact the health, mental well-being and school work of the students.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Hawaii is a state-wide organization made up of six branches (Hilo, Honolulu, Kauai, Kona, Maui, and Windward Oahu) and includes over 3800 supporters statewide. As advocates for gender equity, AAUW of Hawaii promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons.

Please pass this important resolution and thank you for your consideration.

Younghee Overly, Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Hawaii



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Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

RE: SCR 100 / SR 77 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TO PROVIDE FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO STUDENTS ON ALL HAWAII
PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUSES.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** SCR 100/
HR 77, requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products
to students on all Hawaii Campuses.

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 menstrual 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 resolution.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 7:52:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
JoShane Yamauchi	Testifying for Neighborhood Place of Puna	Support	No

Comments:

I am testifying in support of this resolution. I have served in the Puna district school educational system and truly believe supplying students with menstrual supplies will help our struggling families. I have spoken to teenage girls who would never feel comfortable requesting for feminine products nor do they have the ability to purchase supplies both in or out of school. Please consider providing for the needs of our struggling students.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/25/2021 7:35:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a resident of `Alewa Heights and am in strong support of SCR100. When I worked as a program manager of a homeless shelter, one of our regular expenses was for period products. As we are all too aware, some families are struggling and are simply unable to afford these products. No student should feel shame or be bullied because of their ma`i. Instead, they should be able to live in dignity when they are in school.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 7:47:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl B.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

This should be a bill with accompanying \$\$.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 3:16:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chloe Hartwell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this important bill. Free, comfortable period products are a basic human need and essential for Hawai'i's students to gain the benefits of education and full participation in all that our schools offer. Youth should be able to focus on learning without worrying about the cost or accessibility of these products. In previous testimony, it was said that providing these products might adversely affect the DOE budget and priorities, and I cannot think of anything as high of a priority as health. Food is essential, safety is essential, equitable access to healthcare and necessities is essential and should be of the utmost priority. It cannot continue to be treated as a privilege. Please help remove barriers that impact half of our population in so many more ways than academic success. Addressing inequity will allow more of our young people to thrive. It will build stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 5:44:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
alison ellis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am testifying in support of this resolution because I believe that menstrual products should be a hygiene product that is automatically provided in the same level of importance as it is to provide soap, water, and toilet paper for teens in school bathrooms. Below are some major points that support this resolution.

- **Public Health:** Our children are using menstrual products beyond the recommended safe period of time which is between 4-8 hours, and sometimes for days, because they are unable to access menstrual products. They 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.
- **Education Equity:** Lack of menstrual products has resulted in menstruators missing class or school altogether. They can be penalized for failing to pay for pads resulting in restricted participation in school activities. Since menstruation is not an illness, students are not allowed to leave school and will bleed on themselves causing irreparable psychological trauma.
- **Basic Equity:** We seek basic equity for our children. Just as we regulate and ensure toilet paper and paper towels in school restrooms, so too should we do the same for menstrual products. Menstruation is a natural monthly occurrence, and should not be treated differently from any other basic bodily function.

Gender Equality: The lack of access to menstrual products is a clear form of gender-based exclusion and oppression. Menstrual 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.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/26/2021 5:44:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sarah Kern	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been teaching high school and middle school for 8 years, both at Waianae High School on Oahu and now at Chiefess Kamakahalei Middle School on Kauai. At the start of each year (when students are in person) I make the announcement that anyone with a period can ALWAYS feel free to come ask me for period products. The kids laugh or squirm in their seats, but I let them know that it's a part of life for half of us and nobody should be ashamed to ask for supplies if they need them. I then bring my own personal supply of pads, tampons, and pantyliners to school and always make sure to keep it fully stocked so that students don't need to walk all the way across campus to the health room, losing 10+ minutes of class time for what should be a much shorter bathroom break. Many students utilize my personal supply of products, and they appreciate that I allow them to choose the option that works best for them. I also have traveled with school groups at both schools and I have at times been the only chaperone to speak up reminding the organizing (non-menstruating) teachers to add "menstrual products" to the packing list. I then bring my own supply on the trip and still end up giving much of it to students in need.

Students who don't have period products miss out on class instruction. I've had students confess to me that they have "gone home sick" because they leaked and didn't have extra supplies on hand. Some of these students may not be able to afford enough supplies, and others may just be adolescents with changing bodies who are not used to menstruating and lack the confidence to ask for help. When I was attending Kaiser High School 15 years ago, I myself left school early a few times because I was still learning about how my body worked and was not prepared with enough supplies to get through the day. I'm not sure if Kaiser would have been able to provide me with anything to use in an emergency. The school never shared that kind of information with us, and as a 14 year old, I was mortified to ask. This is something that schools can change easily by providing menstrual products in every bathroom, or by giving a supply to each teacher. I have a first aid kit with band aids, alcohol wipes, gloves, and gauze in my classroom that the school provides to me in case of an emergency. Nobody questions that all classes should have a first aid kit, yet if a 12 year old gets her period for the first time in my classroom, the DOE has provided me with nothing to give her. That seems completely outrageous to me.

Students and families should not have to worry about how to afford menstrual products. Students should not be using handfuls toilet paper or paper towels at school to make it

to their last class. Students should not have to leave school early or stay home altogether because they are afraid of running out of supplies and having nowhere to get extras. Students should KNOW what is available to them and where to go if they do have a need for supplies at school. Half of our secondary student population should not be punished for having different needs because of their biology. Menstrual products should be provided at schools for all students who menstruate. Schools should share these products by providing a supply to each teacher or keeping bathrooms stocked, and then by making it clear to students each year where the supplies are available. I support SCR 100 and hope that we can show some love to our students who menstruate by providing them with a basic need in the same way that we supply them with toilet paper, soap, and band aids.

March 27, 2021

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Agaran, Vice-Chair

I am testifying in support of this resolution 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/classtime 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

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 4:44:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan Ramos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Supporting this resolution is about being prepared to support students, plain and simple. The gender equity aspect of this is important, but I would go further to say that this is about recognizing a fact of life and responding in a way that gives students care and dignity, a goal that should exist regardless of gender/sex concerns. The only valid criticism would be about budgetary feasibility, but even on the economic front, this doesn't have to be a big deal (though even if it did, perhaps it's something we should shoulder anyway). Many students will continue using their own menstrual products of choice, which are likely better and/or more expensive than what schools will choose to offer, and in a short period of time it should be easy to calculate a minimum amount of menstrual products that should be on hand throughout the school year. The text of the resolution covers all other arguments that truly matter.

Thank you,

Dylan Ramos

96816

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

March 27, 2021

Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: Testimony in Support of SCR100/SR77

Honourable Senators Dela Cruz, Keith-Agaran, and the Committee on Ways and Means

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

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 7:37:04 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jamie Kapana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Jamie and I support SCR100 because I believe that period products should be free in all public schools. Students shouldn't have to worry about the shame of not being able to afford a basic necessity. I know that you don't know me or my story but growing up I had an unstable housing situation which made it difficult to ask for something so basic, Menstrual products!

None of my schools had it and I couldn't ask anyone at school. We need to end the stigma and take care of our students basic needs . How can we do this? By offering these products to students for free!

How amazing would it have been if schools provided these products to students without the shame so they feel safe/seen/understood.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 8:31:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anna Mackey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support for SCR100-Requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

Aloha, my name is Anna and I am a resident of Hawaii island. I am testifying in support of this resolution because I believe all children in Hawaii should have access to basic necessities including menstration products for our girls. Requiring schools to provide these products free of charge is a wellness issue. Girls already face so many adversities when it comes to puberty and changes while trying to learn in school. Removing the worry would allow girls to focus and remove the stigma around periods. Please support this measure and provide much needed support for our young wahine across Hawaii.

Mahalo for your leadership and service to Hawai'i during these challenging times.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:25:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha WAM Committee,

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, I write in **strong support of SCR100/SR77**, a resolution that takes steps to end period poverty and menstrual inequity in Hawai'i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity.

Nearly half of the world menstruates and yet menstrual inequity is becoming a public health crisis as individuals lack access to menstrual products due to financial, educational and accessibility barriers. Support of the resolution not only provides direct and immediate assistance to our children in need when 47% were already deemed economically disadvantaged by the DOE pre-COVID, but it also ensures that we continue to raise a productive society and offer equal opportunities to education that will bolster and encourage future market work and participation in society.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

Testimony presented to the Senate Ways and Means Committee
March 30, 2021 at 9:00am
By Farrah-Marie Gomes, Ph.D.

**HB SCR 100 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE FREE
MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO STUDENTS ON ALL HAWAII PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUSES**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

I am providing testimony today in strong support of SCR 100 which requests the Department of Education (DOE) to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawai'i public school campuses.

I am a resident of Hawaii Island and am part of the approximate 50% of the state's population that menstruates. I grew up in a home where four of us menstruated each month and I never realized just how fortunate I was that I never needed to think about where my feminine products would come from next month. I simply opened the cabinet and there was always enough products for all of us.

It wasn't until I started working at a local university over 15 years ago that I became exposed to students who couldn't count on this provision. Some of these students do not even know where their next meal will be coming from or where they might be sleeping tonight, let alone where they are going to get feminine products for their next monthly cycle.

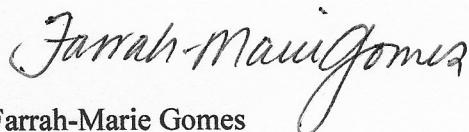
That is why I have become involved in raising awareness about equity issues, especially those that negatively impact women. I am a member of the Hawai'i County Committee on the Status of Women where we recently approved \$2,500 to assist with providing feminine products to Hawai'i Island high schools. We know that implementing new measures can take some time and we didn't want any schools to be without products for the remainder of this already challenging year.

Feminine products are a necessity for women. It is a biological need. Women do not choose this option. It comes as a result of being born female. That is why I strongly support SCR 100.

I realize there are details that need to be worked out about who, how and where to distribute products. The devil is always in the details, but that doesn't mean we give up. If there is a will, there is a way. I encourage us to do right by and for our young women attending DOE schools, some of whom find themselves in embarrassing situations that are a function of their biology. I encourage us to find a way to make this availability possible so that no young woman will ever have to be ashamed of her experiences and instead, can feel supported by her school.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 100.

Mahalo,



Farrah-Marie Gomes

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 12:17:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stacey Moniz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Please accept my testimony in STRONG SUPPORT for SCR100. Feminine hygiene products are very expensive and many young women in school are in need of our support. Having our periods is not a choice and girls and women should have this basic need provided. I think this is a great start until we cover the costs for all people who bleed monthly.

Mahalo.

Peace and love,
Stacey Moniz
Pukalani, Maui

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 2:35:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Edith Neumiller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support SCR 100 to provide free period projects for girls in all public schools in Hawaii.

Aloha,

Edith Neumiller

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 3:50:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alani Bagcal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair

Aloha, my name is Alani Bagcal I am testifying in support of this resolution because I believe that period products should be treated as necessary provided by public schools, just as toilet paper would be provided. Period products are not a "luxury" item to those in literal need of them.

Nearly half of the world menstruates and yet menstrual inequity is becoming a public health crisis as individuals lack access to menstrual products due to financial, educational and accessibility barriers. Support of the resolution not only provides direct and immediate assistance to our children in need when 47% were already deemed economically disadvantaged by the DOE pre-COVID, but it also ensures that we continue to raise a productive society and offer equal opportunities to education that will bolster and encourage future market work and participation in society.

SCR 100/SR 77 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty and menstrual inequity in Hawai'i 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.

Alani Bagcal

96815



Hawaii Women's Coalition

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Honorable Chair Donovan Dela Cruz
Honorable Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Senator J. Kalani English
Senator Lorraine Inouye
Senator Dru Kanuha
Senator Michelle Kidani
Senator Sharon Moriwaki
Senator Maile Shimabukuro
Senator Brian Taniguchi
Senator Glenn Wakai
Senator Kurt Fevella

DATE: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 at 9:00 am

FROM: Hawai'i Women's Coalition

RE: **Support for SCR 100/SR 77-** Requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and 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 support of SCR 100/SR 77. 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.

In addition to resource costs, a lack of access to menstrual products can also cause serious health issues, including emotional duress, physical infection, and disease. Inadequate menstrual support is also associated with other health and psycho-social issues. In addressing these issues, SCR 100/SR 77 promotes gender equity for girls, and transgender and non-binary people and helps ensure the health, safety, and dignity of students in Hawai'i public schools.



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. Research shows that students lacking access to menstrual products 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.

SCR 100/SR 77 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty in Hawai'i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality and education equity.

For all of these reasons, the Hawai'i Women's Coalition is pleased to support SCR 100/SR 77. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Hawai'i Women's Coalition

Contact: hawaiiwomenscoalition@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 30, 2021, 9:00 AM, CR 211 & Via Videoconference

Aloha Respective Senators for the Committee on Ways & Means. My name is Kaylana Kaniaupio and I am testifying in full support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 100, “Requesting the Department of Education to Provide Free Menstrual Products to Students on All Hawaii Public School Campuses.”

As someone who has attended public school for most of my life, I have witnessed many disparities and inequities that are essential to supporting my education and school experience. A big problem facing many students today is the issue of period poverty. Each month, menstruators are challenged with ensuring they have adequate access to obtaining menstrual hygiene products to protect them while on their period. Unfortunately, many of these menstruators do not have the financial means or access to required products to protect them during the 5-7 days while on their period. This has caused many of these students to be absent from school thereby leaving them behind on their work by missing important lectures, exams, and activities. More notably, these absences are forcing students to miss out on much needed time spent with their peers which is vital for their social and emotional health. Menstruators desperately need more support from our public school system. They deserve the same right to an education as their counterparts and they should not be faulted for not having appropriate access to care for their physical health.

There are currently 80,412 students enrolled in the Hawai‘i public school system in grades 7-12 (Hawai‘i State Department of Education, 2021). Roughly half of these students are menstruators which means that an estimated 40,206 students are potentially at risk for missing school each month due to their monthly cycle. According to the State of Hawai‘i Department of Education, chronic absenteeism is considered a “red alert” priority. Students placed in this high-risk category are headed for academic trouble and potentially dropping out of high school. If period poverty is not addressed within our school system, we are choosing to let our students fall behind. It is critical for the Hawaii DOE school system to take action now. Menstruators deserve to have free menstrual products provided on all Hawai‘i public school campuses. I urge you to support Senate Concurrent Resolution 100, “Requesting the Department of Education to Provide Free Menstrual Products to Students on All Hawai‘i Public School Campuses.” As a current high school student, female, and resident of Hawai‘i, I am humbly requesting that you do what is right and support this resolution. All students deserve the right to an education and the right to accessing appropriate healthcare. We cannot afford to let the future of our state fall between the cracks. Take action now for a happier and healthier Hawai‘i.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kaylana Kaniaupio

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 9:10:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teri L Skillman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members,

I am writing in **support** of SCR100 because I have experienced times as an adult female when menstrual products were not available in a restroom in an emergency. It is impossible to convey the panic and desperation that one feels in such instances. This is a problem not only in public schools but in the restrooms at the state university campuses too.

Nearly half of the world menstruates and yet menstrual inequity is becoming a public health crisis as individuals lack access to menstrual products due to financial, educational, and accessibility barriers. Support of the resolution not only provides direct and immediate assistance to our children in need when 47% were already deemed economically disadvantaged by the DOE pre-COVID, but it also ensures that we continue to raise a productive society and offer equal opportunities to education that will bolster and encourage future market work and participation in society.

SCR 100/SR 77 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty and menstrual inequity in Hawai'i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony in **support** of this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Teri Skillman

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:16:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley Galacgac	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members,

My name is Ashley Galacgac. I **strongly support SCR 100** as it is one step towards ending period poverty and menstrual inequity in Hawai'i. This promotes common goals of **public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity** during vital years of youth's lives.

Working in education, I have witnessed students face barriers to learning and these have been exacerbated during the pandemic. There is tremendous urgency to help alleviate the financial and social-emotional stresses that come with not having access to menstrual products as each day means there are students negatively impacted. Many students have been suffering and have felt alone in their experiences and this can be addressed. The impact of SCR 100 will mean students will be supported in providing an environment where they are cared for and can focus on their academic and personal growth.

Please pass SCR 100 and help allocate the necessary funds to end period poverty here in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 10:47:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Harris	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SCR100 fully! I can't imagine a school requiring every student to supply their own toilet paper and soap to care for their bodily functions while at school yet we expect all those who have a period to provide their own period products to care for a basic bodily function that they have zero control over. Imagine urinating in your pants and then being expected to sit in class, pay attention, retain information and participate fully. No, that distraction would be too much. Sadly, so many students have to worry about their one pad they could afford not being enough to get through the school day, not being able to purchase any period products, or being caught off guard by an unexpected period. Whatever the reason they experience anxiety and stress about being able to care for their bodies and about having an embarrassing leak while still being expected to learn and function as the other students do. The school years are pivotal in setting our youth up for success. Let's remove the barrier of not being able to care for their own bodies while at school.

These earlier years in puberty are also the years when irregular and unpredictable periods are the norm. So even if you are lucky enough to have a family who can supply you with period products you rarely have enough right when you need them. Throughout my junior high years it was common for me to miss 2-3 half days of school each month because of my period. I would inevitably leak and have to go home to change and clean up. If I could have had easy access to the products I needed I wouldn't have had to try to "stretch" the length of time between changes and inevitably end up with an issue causing me to miss precious time in class. I can't imagine how hard this is for those who can't afford period care on a regular basis. They are at such a disadvantage which could easily be eliminated by SCR100. Please don't let a basic bodily function stand in the way of one more student's education.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/28/2021 11:58:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Madeline Walsh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha mai,

I am a senior at the University of Hawai'i, a Kahuku High School alumni, and a young woman with a period. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in *strong support of SCR 100*.

I remember being a freshman at Kahuku High School, unable to participate in gym class and other courses throughout the day because I started my period unexpectedly and wasn't carrying any menstrual products on me. I remember hearing the stories of my friends with excruciatingly embarrassing remembrances of period stains, being unable to control their menstrual bleeding in class, on the school bus, etc.

Half of the population menstruates while at school. Being able to take care of your body while in school is integral to productive learning and academic success, not to mention excelling in sports and other extracurricular activities.

This resolution will enfranchise so many young people around the state and give them the resources needed to take charge of their life and their time while in school and become confident, productive members of society. I don't want to look back when I'm older and see young kids and teens experiencing the same hardships I did while I was in middle and high school. I urge you to pass this extremely critical piece of legislation, for all of Hawai'i's youth.

Maddy Walshmaddy.walsh.12@gmail.com**96712**

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 1:17:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brandy Yee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Students of menstruating age needs to have pads for free and available to them at school. This will help them not miss school or leave school early because of an accident. So many children suffer from period poverty and tax dollars can be used for this. We need to do better Hawaii!!



The Thirty-First Legislature, State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Honorable Chair Donovan Dela Cruz
Honorable Vice Chair Gilbert Keith-Agaran
Senator J. Kalani English
Senator Lorraine Inouye
Senator Dru Kanuha
Senator Michelle Kidani
Senator Sharon Moriwaki
Senator Maile Shimabukuro
Senator Brian Taniguchi
Senator Glenn Wakai
Senator Kurt Fevella

Tuesday, March 30, 2021, 9:00 am

RE: Support for SCR100/SR 77 - Requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee,

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i **strongly supports SCR 100/SR 77** requesting the Department of Education to make menstrual products for students free on all Hawai'i public school campuses. 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, through service, advocacy and education.

As Native Hawaiian women born and raised in Waimānalo, O'ahu, my sisters and I started the nonprofit to ensure that individuals of menstruation age have the right to access sanitary products, safe and hygienic places to use them, and the right to manage their bodies without shame or stigma. Ma'i Movement Hawai'i recognizes the all-encompassing societal challenges inherent in tackling the broader issue of period poverty for the local community from our own personal experiences and through this work.

The average cost of one menstrual product is \$0.15 and SCR 100/SR 77 is essentially requesting the DOE invest \$7.50 - \$15 per year per student to address a need that impacts public health, education, gender equality and basic need for half of the student population. Ma'i Movement Hawai'i is particularly concerned with statewide statistics from the DOE and Aloha United Way that, respectively, 47% of students in the DOE system were deemed "economically disadvantaged" in 2019, and 60% of local families are struggling to meet basic needs due to the ongoing pandemic.

We have also been made aware of multiple anecdotal reports that some local area menstruators are putting their health at risk entirely due to a lack of access to menstrual products. For instance, some menstruators are choosing to use period products in excess of the recommended time frames or unhygienic alternatives such as socks, toilet paper, diapers, or newspapers. In addition, these and other menstruators also report having to miss school, as well as that they are experiencing further emotional stress as a result of their access to period products.

The cost of menstrual products is not the only barrier or problematic issue 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 experiences trouble, painful shame, and multiple barriers when accessing menstrual products. This is unacceptable and we should not tolerate these conditions and environments that could be easily changed.

SCR 100/SR 77 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty in Hawai'i and promotes common goals requiring low investment:

- **Public Health:** By using menstrual products in excess of the recommended time frames, 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. This potentially places an additional financial burden on the state should they be on Medicaid, where the number of residents on Medicaid has increased 24% amid the pandemic.
- **Basic Equity:** Just as we regulate and ensure toilet paper and paper towels in school restrooms, so too should we do the same for menstrual products. Menstruation is a natural monthly occurrence, and should not be treated differently from any other basic bodily function. The notion that providing menstrual products would result in pilfering is also unfounded and biased.
- **Education Equity:** Lack of menstrual products has resulted in menstruators missing class or school altogether. They can be penalized for failing to pay for menstrual products resulting in restricted participation in school activities. Since menstruation is not an illness, students are not allowed to leave school and will bleed on themselves causing irreparable psychological trauma.
- **Gender Equality:** The lack of access to menstrual products is a clear form of gender-based exclusion and oppression. Menstrual 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.

We urge you to support **SCR 100/SR 77** to help improve the lives of public 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 during these challenging times.

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

ORGANIZATION SUPPORT

Parents And Children Together	Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center
Community Alliance on Prisons	Ke Ola Mamo
AF3IRM Hawai'i	The Pantry by Feeding Hawaii Together
Breastfeeding Hawaii	Bay Clinic, Inc.
Going Home Hawaii	Trans Hawai'i Project
Trillium Birthing Services	Central Middle School
Hoola Lahui Hawaii	Nest for Families
Kevin Moran Coaching	Malama I Ke Ola Health Center
Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	UHM Women's Center
Hale Kipa	Maui AIDS Foundation
Hawai'i Arts Alliance	HHSC Kauai Region
Women Helping Women	Lanai Community Health Center

CONSTITUENT SUPPORT

As of this submission, we had 200+ individuals sign our petition from all Senate Districts and 45 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. Below are a just a few:

I am a teacher at an elementary school and have provided these products to so many girls along the years. They are embarrassed to ask but wouldn't have to if it were available to them at school for free. Mahalo - Maile , District 3 - Kona, Ka'u (96725)

Because safety, hygiene and education are what we should provide future generations with. These items are expensive and sadly the better quality the more costly. A girl struggles with the fact of bleeding monthly, add cost to a unavoidable, unwanted, uncomfortable, at times painful reoccurrence, and you have something that can scar you for life as a negative, when it is simply a fact, and one of the many, facts of life. We can do better as adults, we can protect and prepare our girls that are already struggling, with this act of kindness. - Debora , District 4 - Hilo, Hamakua, Kohala, Waimea, Waikoloa, Kona (96738)

To have the highest possible impact on the individual at the most critical time in their development. - Lyn , District 4 - Hilo, Hamakua, Kohala, Waimea, Waikoloa, Kona (96743)

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 5 - Wailuku, Waihe'e, Kahului (96732)

These are a necessity for students. Some are also not in the position to provide these products for their children. There is also a concern for any transgender or nonbinary students who have to face stigma to try and purchase these. They should not feel shame due to their gender identity. Schools should be a safe place for students to receive these items. - Joyce , District 5 - Wailuku, Waihe'e, Kahului (96793)

Because not all families can afford to live in Hawaii and buy period products - Jen-Nai , District 5 - Wailuku, Waihe'e, Kahului (96793)

Access to free period products is so important for people with periods. Period products can be incredibly expensive making some families choose between food on the table or sanitary products and that is just unacceptable. For many teens, getting ahold of period products can be extremely stressful, especially since many aren't comfortable talking about their periods yet. Some may not have access to transportation or the cash to go buy period products when needed. Let's provide free period products in public schools! - Mana , District 7 - Hana, East and Upcountry Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Kaho'olawe (96768)"

I support free period products in public school because now and when I grew up in Lanai High and Elementary public school, I knew other girls whose families couldn't afford to buy period products and would ask other friends for those products at school. It would help those students or families who cannot afford those products. - Thessalonica , District 7 - Hana, East and Upcountry Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Kaho'olawe (96763)

At the low income public school that I teach at I have seen girls leave school early because they are unable to pay the nurse for a pad or a tampon. Girls should not be penalized or charged a fee for their bodies. Having a period should never stop a girl from being able to learn and access their education. - Elianna , District 11 - Manoa, Makiki, Punchbowl, Papakolea (96822)

Students in this area have a very hard time purchasing feminine products. The purchase price is a matter of buying food or pads, this is heart wrenching. - Louise , District 11 - Manoa, Makiki, Punchbowl, Papakolea (96813)

When I was a student in high school, I have been in a position where I couldn't afford period products and had to improvise with using toilet paper and paper towels in the school restrooms. I once went to the school nurse for a pad, and ask her could I have several and she very rudely told me no I can have one. I think that not having free period products punishes women and other people who have periods, should they not have the funds/access for needed items. - Marissa , District 12 - Waikiki, Ala Moana, Kaka'ako, McCully, Mo'ili'ili (96826)

Essential products should be accessible to all regardless of socio economic levels. - Tim , District 15 - Kalihi, Mapunapuna, Airport, Salt Lake, Aliamanu, Foster Village, Hickam, Pearl Harbor (96818)

It's not a choice, and the extra cost can place a huge strain on people. Beyond that the knowledge and comfort of not having to worry if their period starts unexpectedly - Jes , District 15 - Kalihi, Mapunapuna, Airport, Salt Lake, Aliamanu, Foster Village, Hickam, Pearl Harbor (96819)

Because no child should have to go out these products, school should be a safe haven. A lot of girls go without at home because they simply can't afford it. This would give the young girls/parents peace of mind. - Leesean , District 18 - Mililani Town, portion of Waipi'o Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia (96789)

I work at two Title I schools and I see first hand how much students need free period products. - Dayna , District 19 - 'Ewa Beach, Ocean Pointe, 'Ewa by Gentry, Iroquois Point, portion of 'Ewa Villages (96706)

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 19 - 'Ewa Beach, Ocean Pointe, 'Ewa by Gentry, Iroquois Point, portion of 'Ewa Villages (96706)

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 19 - 'Ewa Beach, Ocean Pointe, 'Ewa by Gentry, Iroquois Point, portion of 'Ewa Villages (96706)

As an educational assistant, I see many teachers using their own money to supply the needs of their students, including period products! - Bailey , District 21 - Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale, Ko 'Olina, Nanakuli, Ma'ili, Wai'anae, Makaha, Makua (96792)

Children can't help who their parents are or the fact that they have menses. School should be a place for all students to be able to focus on learning not hiding or worrying about a supply that is needed. Period products are a school supply and should be made readily available. - Pana , District 21 - Kalaeloa, Honokai Hale, Ko 'Olina, Nanakuli, Ma'ili, Wai'anae, Makaha, Makua (96792)

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 22 - Mililani Mauka, Waipi'o Acres, Wheeler, Wahiawa, Whitmore Village, portion of Poamoho (96789)

I want all girls to have the access to feminine products for their period. This will cause less stigma if offered to all girls at schools, I was shame and often forgot to bring and had to "borrow" or "beg" from another girl, even went home a few times. I work in an area where period poverty is rampant at KPT housing and girls often come to my office embarrassed needing products. - Tina , District 22 - Mililani Mauka, Waipi'o Acres, Wheeler, Wahiawa, Whitmore Village, portion of Poamoho (96789)

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 7:44:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vera Zambonelli	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Giving access to menstrual products is inclusive and the right thing to do. Menstrual 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.



'Ilima Intermediate Students w/ Our Menstrual Equity Mascot - Paddy the Pad

March 30, 2021

Committee on Ways & Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin and I teach at 'Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach. I'm the faculty sponsor the campus GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance), a club for students who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, etc) or as allies of these students, and the Ilima Activist Club for students who are working for change in our community. Both groups of students have been on a 2 year quest for menstrual equity in our public schools. **Myself, and my students are writing to you today in strong support of SCR100 which encourages the Hawaii Department of Education to provide free menstrual products in all public schools to all students who need them.**

Sadly, students will not be able to testify at this hearing over Zoom because of state-mandated SBA testing. I know that your schedule is time-sensitive but in the future if consideration could be given to make hearings at times students could attend, teachers like me would deeply appreciate it.

My students worked with Representative Amy Perruso's office to give ideas for the creation of HB 2430 for free menstrual products in public schools last session, but that bill died when the pandemic closed the legislature.

This legislative session we worked with Senator Acasio to revive the bill, but SB 966 died in committee this session. We met with Senator Kidani virtually on March 5, 2021 to talk to her about this issue and she explained that a resolution would put us in a good position to help raise awareness on menstrual equity next session.

We were thrilled to see this resolution being offered, and rise in support of it today. Here's our story:

In Sept 2019, after a student had an embarrassing incident bleeding through their clothes during the school day and being bullied for it, my students began discussions about menstrual equity on campus. We began running a service learning project collecting pads and tampons and making a "Menstruation Station" where students can pick up items as they need them.

We went through 300 kits in 3 months.

I wrote a grant through DonorsChoose for \$350 to stock the first set, but that level of financing on campus is not sustainable for a single teacher, and proves that this needs to be an item provided on campus.

(Students creating "menstruation station care packs" with tampons, pads, and wipes. We crowd funded the supplies through DonorsChoose.org (like "Go Fund Me" for teachers, Fall 2019)

It was revealed that it's common practice for school nurses to charge students money to get a pad. 'Ilima is a Title 1 campus where over 50% of students get free lunch; these aren't students who have money on hand. And even if they would HAVE money, I would never ask a student who didn't have a pencil to BUY a pencil from me; I just give them a pencil because it's a school supply. Menstrual supplies are school supplies when you're a student and should be also freely given if we're committed to equity. New ACLU research indicated that Title 1 students can miss 3-5 days per year if they don't have hygiene supplies. Thankfully, the wonderful charity "I Support the Girls - Hawaii" has supplied us with more kits, but we're quickly running out.

Since starting the "Menstruation Station" at Ilima, I've heard many stories from students that let me know lack of menstrual supplies is a huge issue. On an average day, I give out 3-5 kits. We have students in foster care who don't want to "bother" their foster parents by asking for menstrual supplies. We have students with moms deployed who don't know how to talk to dad about getting pads. We have the EA's (teacher's aids) from the FSC (life skills) classes coming to get supplies for special needs students. We have trans students who come and borrow my staff bathroom key to use the pads. Girls have shared the items they have tried to "make pads" out of including socks, paper towels, and tissues. More than one student shared that they've tried to "wring out" pads to use them longer - a practice that could make them sick. And we have general middle schoolers with unpredictable cycles who often are unprepared for a period.

I believe that free, and comfortable menstrual supplies are critical for the academic success of half our population, and I support this resolution urging HIDOE to make this a priority issue. By providing these items we are showing the same commitment to equity that the nations of Scotland and New Zealand now show their populations by providing these items. Plus, we fight the stigma by talking openly about menstruation, building safer and healthier communities for all. I urge your committee to please do the same.

Mahalo,
Sarah "Mili" Milianta-Laffin
STEM Lab Teacher, Ilima Intermediate School

PS: To see our work, check us out on social media: (Twitter/IG @MiliLaff & Class Page @STEMwithMili)

Statements in Support by Ilima Intermediate & JCHS Students

The following statements come from members of the Ilima Intermediate Students in the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) Club, and our 21st Century funded "Activist Club."

"As a person who experiences periods, I believe that we should be provided free period products at school. As one of the leaders of the Gender-Sexuality Alliance and Activist Club, I can tell you we all agree. Free menstrual products would create a better learning environment for everyone who experiences menstruation in our schools.

This would be an immense help. It could eliminate both the stigma against talking about menstruation, and also the fear of being without pads at school. As a trans student, these fears are even larger for me.

My teacher, Mrs. Mili, gives me her keys after school so I can safely and comfortably use menstrual products at school. In September 2019, the GSA and Activist Club worked to make a station where people could take menstrual products if they needed. Sometimes I take a care package from our station, since often I don't expect my period or come prepared. We've given out more than half of the packages we've made in around 2 months.

This fact shows that we need the products.

The GSA and Activist Club cannot keep supplying the station we already have, because we don't have enough money to do so. By supplying menstruation products for free at schools, in the nurse's office, and in the bathrooms, it will become easier for people to get what they need.

A large number of absences have been traced back to menstruation problems. Oftentimes, the people who menstruate cannot afford pads, or clean their stained clothes, making them embarrassed. So their solution is to stay home from school. It may add up, leaving them behind in school, and causing many problems.

By giving schools and students free pads, this can be eliminated, and schools will be one step closer to being accessible to everyone. We must add Hawai'i to the list of states providing free menstruation products to its students. We need free menstrual products in the nurse's office and in the bathroom, so that anyone who needs them can easily receive them.



Mahalo for Reading, D Prymer (JCHS 9th Grader)

"If people who bleed don't have what they need to make it through a school day, then we're really not all equal. Even though I'm a boy who doesn't bleed, I want my female and trans friends to have what they need to be comfortable to learn at school.

Boys should know about menstrual cycles and support girls so they don't feel ashamed about something totally normal. Schools can help by paying for period supplies. Please support the resolutions."



Gabe Tucci-Rugg

"If boys had periods, schools would probably already have pads for them. Schools tend to supply what boys need but not what girls need. Real men support and respect women no matter what. We need to prove that we understand their struggles by manning up and making it mandatory that schools buy menstruation supplies for students who need them. Support the resolutions please."



Jaimes T. Steele

JCHS 9th Grader _____

"In school, when I'm on my period, I just have to deal with it. You can feel yourself bleeding through your clothes but you just have to wait if it's a male teacher. If it's a female teacher they might be able to help you, but not everyone will. Pads are expensive and teachers don't make much money.

Teachers should not have to buy pads for kids. The schools should buy them to keep girls and people who bleed in schools. They tell us all the time that attendance is important - well if it is - they should supply the stuff to keep us comfortable and here.

In Boston they learned that 1 in 5 girls skip school because they do not have pads. The city decided to buy them for the schools. Our state should do the same. Please support the resolution.



Sherleen Joyce Brion
Ilima Intermediate 8th Grader

“Not having pads provided in school sucks because girls like me don’t always know when our periods are coming. Some girls are in foster care and are afraid to say they need pads. The school gives us pencils when we don’t have a pencil, it should be the same for pads.

The nurse gives each teacher a small bag with bandaids. If the government bought pads and gave them to the nurse, she could give them to the teachers to have extra if anyone needs them.”



Ashanti Riparip
Ilima Intermediate 8th Grader

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 9:30:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Pazos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Community Voices on Period Poverty:

Maui Women: I didn't live in Hawaii at the time, but I experienced times I couldn't even justify dollar store products.

Maui Women: I have had days where I could not get up because I knew I had nothing to change into if I had a leak.

Maui Women: I was not able to purchase items and my mom could not afford them. So I had to miss school for a week.

Maui Women: I hate having to make the choice but I know my daughter must have these items. So I sacrifice things I need for her. I remember what it was like to be around friends and even though the world looks different yung ladies should still be able to carry themselves with grace and confidence.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 1:38:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Racquel Raneses	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee on Ways & Means,

My name is Racquel Raneses. I am a resident of Mililani, Oahu. I am submitting written testimony in support of SCR100. SCR100 directly supports students in the public-school learning by providing essential menstrual hygiene products. Free access to menstrual hygiene products, prioritizes the needs of menstruating students within a historically sexist education system but directly celebrates diversity. Individuals who do not have access to menstrual hygiene products often miss work or school during menstruation for multiple reasons from infections, disease or to hide from the humiliation and stress of going to work or school without easy access to the necessary protection. Other items such as soap, toilet paper, and paper towels are free while menstrual hygiene products are not but are necessary to effectively sanitarilly manage natural and unavoidable bodily functions. The "Bring Your Own Tampon Policy" is a violation of human rights and equal protection. Students are then burdened with the additional cost of menstrual products to maintain a healthy a healthy school environment, including those who do not menstruate.

Since beginning of my MSW journey, I've realized that there is value and strength that resides in my own personal stories and experiences. As I recall my experiences growing up as the youngest and only girl in a single parent household, I can't help but think about the traumatic experience of discovering my very first menstrual period. I was so embarrassed and ashamed to say what happened nor did I have the courage to ask for a pad. I did the only thing my ten-year-old brain could think of at the time which was to wad up some ripped toilet paper and stuff it in my underwear. But, why was I ashamed or embarrassed of my body's natural response and growth? As a nation and as a community, we have not prioritized gender equity and menstrual equity. We have a long and unfortunate history of sex discrimination that has further stigmatized and perpetuated degrading attitudes around women. Lawmakers continue to prioritize items such as Rogaine, Viagra and condoms as "necessities" in which they are exempt for most sales taxes while menstrual hygiene products are not and are considered "luxury items." Obviously, these are perspectives of non-menstruating individuals.

Supporting this bill supports students from all backgrounds, communities and experiences by creating an environment that is safe, just and equitable. We, as a

community, must support our future generations by meeting their basic human needs and the right to a safe learning environment that celebrates diversity as well as promoting gender equity.

Mahalo nui,

Racquel Raneses

Senate Committee on Education
Honorable Chair Michelle Kidani
Honorable Vice Chair Donna Mercado Kim



Susan Park

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Support for SCR100 - Requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses

Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and honorable members of the Committee,

Aloha, my name is Susan Park, I am a current undergraduate nursing school student and I am testifying in strong support of SCR 100, which requests that the Department of Education provides free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses.

As a low-income female student, born and raised in Oahu, I have experienced first-hand how lacking our public schools are in essential hygiene resources. I distinctly remember moments where I had the choice to go home or use toilet paper and a jacket to try and hide a menstrual bleed temporarily.

Many women have irregular periods, many women can't afford to buy enough pads. In 2015, women were seen to spend over \$70 per year on menstrual products, that number growing as every year goes by (Quinn, 2016). These numbers may not seem much, however for low-income and homeless women, those numbers could mean having to skip school or work. One homeless patient mentioned how her shelter would only provide her "2 pads per cycle, whereas the average woman uses approximately 20 tampons/pads per cycle". With an estimated 3.5 million homeless people in a given year, this is only one of no doubt many similar stories (Parrillo & Feller, 2017).

A woman should not have to decide between getting an education and taking care of an inevitable and biological part of life. I implore the committee to pass SCR 100, to further support the basic and needed necessities of our students.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify, as well as your continued dedication to the community of Hawai'i.

Sincere regards,
Susan Park

To: Senate Committee on Education
Senator Michelle Kidani, Chair
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair

From: Trevor Rufino
ADN RN, UH Hilo BS Nursing Student

Date: Monday, March 29, 2021



Dear Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and members of the Committee,

I am testifying in the support of SCR 100, which requests that the Hawai'i State Department of Education provide free menstrual products to all Hawai'i's students.

Currently, menstrual products are treated as "luxuries" when they are necessities. People should not be forced to choose between paying for food or menstrual products. The cost of such products creates a financial barrier to access that disproportionately affects low-income families and students.

Many low-income students who are unable to access enough of these products end up missing school, using a singular product for longer than suggested or end up using less sanitary options such as towel cloths and toilet paper. Using feminine products longer than suggested or utilizing unsanitary alternatives for menstruation increases a person's risk for life-threatening infections. States such as Illinois have made the shift to protect our student's health and education by providing free menstrual products in student bathrooms grade 6-12.

Historically in the U.S., the topic of menstruation has been treated as taboo which has led students to feel ashamed of their bodies. Placing free and easily accessible menstrual products in student bathrooms will help destigmatize the topic and prevent students from experiencing embarrassment from menstrual accidents.

Menstruation affects half of the student population in Hawai'i, meaning that half the students will experience menstruation while in school. By allowing free access to menstrual products in schools, those who menstruate can learn in an environment like those who don't, equally free from the stress and distractions that are associated with acquiring and using menstrual products. I urge Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, and the members of the Committee to pass SCR 100. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

LATE

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 5:29:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle Condry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please consider supporting SCR100. There are kids missing school because they don't have period products. There are kids going to school risking TSS and other infections from using products longer than their recommended use. There are kids going to school but forced to use socks and newspaper because they don't have period products.

Nearly half of the world menstruates and yet menstrual inequity is becoming a public health, education, gender equality and basic equity crisis as individuals lack access to menstrual products due to financial, educational and accessibility barriers.

SCR 100 is an initiative that takes steps to end period poverty in Hawai'i and promotes common goals requiring low investment:

â—• Public Health: Our children are using menstrual products beyond the recommended safe period of time which is between 4-8 hours, and sometimes for days, because they are unable to access menstrual products. They 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.

â—• Basic Equity: We seek basic equity for our children. Just as we regulate and ensure toilet paper and paper towels in school restrooms, so too should we do the same for menstrual products. Menstruation is a natural monthly occurrence, and should not be treated differently from any other basic bodily function.

â—• Education Equity: Lack of menstrual products has resulted in menstruators missing class or school altogether. They can be penalized for failing to pay for pads resulting in restricted participation in school activities. Since menstruation is not an illness, students are not allowed to leave school and will bleed on themselves causing irreparable psychological trauma.

â—• Gender Equality: The lack of access to menstrual products is a clear form of gender-based exclusion and oppression. Menstrual 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. SCR 100 recognizes that access to menstrual products is integral to health, mental well-being and academics. Our local data and national statistics prove how critical it is and have been

included in the resolution itself. We urge you to support SCR 100 to help improve the lives of public school students in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 6:18:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cyd L. Hoffeld	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Cyd Hoffeld and I am in **strong support of Bill SCR100/SR 77** requesting the Department of Education to provide free menstrual products to students on all Hawaii public school campuses.

For the past 20 years, I have worked in the field of health education for the largest community health center on Hawai'i Island. In that time, I have had the privilege to teach lessons on reproductive health in over 16 schools to students in grades 4th through 12th. An important part of these presentations include information on reproductive anatomy and physiology and the important cycle that menstruation plays in the reproduction of human life. This is an experience that happens to over 50% of our population here in Hawai'i.

During these sessions, even from the age of 9 years old, girls are already embarrassed and confused by their amazing physical and emotional transition from childhood towards adulthood and the rite of passage that menstruation represents. This shame that many feel not only comes from not understanding their bodies but can also be due to the lack of financial resources and accessibility by their families to purchase adequate amounts of period products that are very expensive and are needed for twelve months of each year...in Hawai'i, one of the most expensive places to live made worse by the pandemic.

In my own life as a kanaka 'Ā• iwi, I was the youngest of three girls in a household of six children in Hilo. My parents managed to provide food, shelter, clothing, transportation, as well as all of the other necessities in our lives including monthly period products for four of us. I remember occasionally having to use rolled up paper towels and toilet paper in school because I was too embarrassed to go to the health room to ask for a pad. It would have been so much easier if free period products were accessible in bathrooms. Remember, there were six children buying schools lunches every day. Any additional cost of even .25 cents to purchase pads would have been a hardship for our family. I know this from my own struggles as a single mother taking care of two girls going through puberty which was not an easy ordeal either. My budget was limited and my expenses were great. At one point, I accessed public assistance to help make ends meet.

It is because of my personal and professional experience that I am compelled to step forward knowing that others have had the same experiences and many can be spared. These are painful memories that can be mitigated by your **support of Bill SCR100/SR 77**.

Mahalo nui,

Cyd Hoffeld

LATE

SCR-100

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 7:24:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2021 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Other states have been doing this already. New York is one example. In reading about some of the states already doing this funding was not a show stopper.

I find it hard to believe the amount of written testimony from the DOE and the negative connotations. No one thinks you wave a magic wand and it happens. The DOE makes it sound like it is too much work.

Pointing out the implementation plans and then making it sound as though its too expensive and too difficult.

But its about time the DOE recognizes that their ONLY purpose is to SERVE our STUDENTS!!

If only these women would go back to the days when they were in school and started their period. Or think of it being the first time and YOU ARE IN CLASS!

If you can't remember, then imagine. AND the DOE is offering TWO PADS A DAY! REALLY! REALLY? Then the DOE throws in the "nominal fee" phrase. Are they on another planet? Who dreams this stuff up? Also worried about clogging toilets and plumbing costs. Well wadded up toilet paper will do the same thing.

To top this off, seeking legal guidance regarding liability for toxic shock syndrome if tampons are provided to students at school.

Until more information on this topic is available, only menstrual pads are being considered for distribution. LISTEN! NO YOUNG WOMEN IS GONNA CARE IF IT IS A PAD OR TAMPON. Forget the Legal Guidance, stalling the process, just get PADS!!

Ever tried to roll up toilet paper to use because you don't have a pad? The embarrassment of having to ask another student and to top it off, LEAKAGE!

The DOE can't figure this out, maybe absenteeism isn't important. I hear NO empathy, NO concern, from the DOE only naysaying.

One menstrual pad costs approximately \$0.14. The total cost for menstrual pads each year is estimated to be \$737,000.00. I WOULD CHALLENGE THESE NUMBERS! HAVE YOU HEARD OF BUYING IN BULK?

Here's where the Board is getting thrown under the bus. Passage of this Resolution would have a financial impact on the Department and may adversely impact priorities as indicated in the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board)-approved budget. To provide menstrual products to students would require initial and long-term costs for dispensers to be installed, repaired, and generally maintained; receptacles to encourage proper disposal of menstrual products; and on-going supplies. Equipment and supplies would be necessary for 294 school campuses. Providing unlimited access to menstrual products for free (instead of for a nominal fee) may have the unintended negative consequence of clogged drains and associated plumbing costs. BLAH, BLAH, BLAH...

But most of us know that many teachers try to have products available. Again, teachers paying out of pocket. Why? Because they do it for our STUDENTS!

Maybe someone needs to remind the DOE who they SERVE!!