



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
March 16, 2023

The Honorable Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education
The Thirty-Second Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Kim and Committee Members:

SUBJECT: SR23/SCR27

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities **supports SR23/SCR27**, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support ending menstrual inequality by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms.

Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) living in a licensed or certified care home only receive a \$50 per month personal allowance for their monthly incidental expenditures. This allowance is for the individual to use on incidental items the individual may need, such as telephone expenses, hobbies, haircuts, clothing, etc. However, these individuals usually have no money left to spend on most of these items after paying for essential items such as shampoo, deodorant, and menstrual supplies. The personal allowance these individuals receive has not been increased since 2007.

People who rely on menstrual products living in these circumstances should not be forced to use this allowance on the menstrual supplies of their choice. We believe this bill is moving our state in the right direction, supporting our individuals that require menstrual products in their daily lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in support of SR23/SCR27**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daintry Bartoldus".

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 9:26:08 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Miyahara	Testifying for Kapi'olani Community College	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SR23**, which requires the University of Hawai'i to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on any University of Hawai'i campus, including the community colleges. I would like to request an amendment that education centers also be included in this bill. This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

Every day I would carry a pad or tampon with me every day because I never know when it starts and it is not guaranteed if I will wear something that could help cover up the period stains on my pants/skirt/shorts/etc. throughout my day if it just happens to start while I am out in public which is usually the case. I am very fortunate to be able to afford pads, but that does not mean everyone is able to. During my college years, I had a friend who, several times, would only eat rice and ketchup for breakfast because that was the only thing she could afford. If she couldn't afford to eat breakfast every day, then was she even able to afford any period products? There are many others who share the same problem and question: what necessity should be sacrificed in order to afford something as basic as food or menstruation products? Especially with rising costs for everything due to inflation it has become even harder for people who are trying just trying to live day-by-day, and for our case, to better their lives by getting an education. And on top of that, we are being charged a luxury tax for these products which means an extra cost to afford a basic need. "So, what? It's just a few more cents." Some may think that. But it matters to someone who has to pinch every penny possible just to be able to live on the islands.

No one should be subjected to stigmas, stares, mockery, and shaming just because of a natural biological process which in turn can definitely affect their education. We are a college and this bill will definitely help anyone in need.

I have seen the products that our Honor Society provides with their own money (successfully, I might add, since our Spring 2018 semester) being put to good use. Every day throughout the semester, someone from the Honor Society comes in our office to refill the dispensers with products and sometimes even came back several times that day because they did not bring enough with them to fill the many dispensers throughout our campus. It is not like we can only use one product per person per day, that is not sanitary. Each person may require more depending on how their menstruation works. These products may seem small and not worth using mind space for, but they are very much needed to help someone get by day-by-day. I

almost had to use it a few times myself when I thought I had nothing on my person when my menstruation had started. Using toilet paper or napkins as padding do not work and are not viable solutions even if temporary.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products.

New [research](#) led by George Mason University's College of Public Health found that one in ten college students in the US is affected by period poverty every month and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year. Compared to those who had never experienced period poverty, those who did were most likely to report moderate to severe depression. Furthermore, inadequate access resulted in respondents resorting to coping methods, like using other materials in lieu of products, using products longer than the recommended time, or going without any products.

Lastly, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty.

The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

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

SC23 Testimony

**By Julie Rancilio, Professor of History and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Advisor at Kapi‘olani Community College**

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and members of the committee,

I am testifying in support of SR23, which requests that the University of Hawai‘i support ending menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution that takes the first step to address menstrual inequity on all campuses and help to end period poverty for our students.

Passing this resolution is important and much needed because it affects student success. All women have a story of needing a menstrual product in public. When I first started teaching at Kapi‘olani Community College 19 years ago, my period started about five minutes before I was scheduled to teach my last history class for the day. Cancelling class was not an option because it would have negatively impacted the students and their progress in the course. I didn’t have any period products, there was no one around to ask (which is often embarrassing and uncomfortable especially if you don’t know the person), and there were no product dispensers, not even old-fashioned ones that required quarters, anywhere on campus. So, what did I do? I went to the bathroom, used toilet paper to craft a “makeshift” pad, took my sweatshirt and wrapped it around my waist, and taught my one hour and fifteen minute class. I told students that I could not stay after class due to an appointment and I immediately headed home. This is just one of thousands of stories which justifies providing free menstrual products on campus.

In Fall 2017, members of the Alpha Kappa Psi chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society at Kapi‘olani Community College (for which I am the advisor), identified the lack of menstrual products on campus as a major concern, which caused students to miss class if they unexpectedly started their period and did not have any products with them. They also noted that many students could not afford period products and thus were forced to stay home during their menstrual cycles each month. Honor Society students did a petition drive and got nearly 1,000 signatures (from students, faculty, and staff) in support of the college providing free menstrual products on campus. They also decided that it was important to do a pilot project to gather data and for the semester they provided free tampons and pads in four restrooms on campus.

They hung “makeshift” plastic tub dispensers, posted signage, and spread awareness on campus. One Honor Society student was responsible for monitoring, refilling, and recording the data for one of the four restrooms at least once a week for the entire semester. All of the products (tampons and pads) were purchased by the Honor Society. One of the Hallmarks of PTK is service and this, according to the students, was a much needed campus service project. During the semester, the chapter received unsolicited positive feedback from our campus community. One professor wrote, “Just wanted to say how much I appreciate the Honor Society’s project! I used the ‘Iliahi restroom yesterday, and saw the feminine hygiene products in the bathroom. Great idea and so needed! Another staff member wrote, “I am so proud of our campus today. Please give a shout out to the KCC Honor Society for setting up free feminine hygiene products throughout our space. Although I am an analyst now and don’t interact with students as much, I know that during my time as a reference librarian, there were occasions when women needed

SC23 Testimony

**By Julie Rancilio, Professor of History and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Advisor at Kapi‘olani Community College**

something and we didn't have a pad or tampon available. This will make for a more comfortable campus. Great work!”

In Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, the first year of the pilot project, a total of 1,944 tampons and 2,732 pad were used. This was an indication of the success of the initiative, but more importantly that there was a clear need for providing free menstrual products and so the Honor Society students felt it necessary to continue to do this. As the recipient of a 2019 Women’s Campus Club grant, I was able to help the students scale up the program, by purchasing seven one-touch dispensers that each hold 50 tampons and 50 pads. Since the project began we have dispensed over 10,000 tampons and 15,000 pads.

So, today on the Kapi‘olani CC campus seven restrooms, including one gender-neutral restroom dispense free menstrual products. The seven restrooms that were chosen were selected in such a way that all areas of the campus are covered, meaning that no one is more than one or two buildings away from a restroom where free products are available. For the past five years, the free menstrual product program has continued to be fully student driven (monitoring, refilling products, and recording data) and student funded, through the Honor Society. Despite the success and scalability of the KapCC program, it is not sustainable. Furthermore, it is my belief that we as a university system should not be asking our students to pay out of pocket for menstrual products, which are necessary due to one’s biology. We don’t ask student organizations to buy toilet paper, soap, paper towels, or toilet seat covers and we shouldn’t be asking students to pay for menstrual products, which are dispensed much less frequently and thus more affordable for the university when compared to these other restroom products.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. In Fall 2017, 58.9 percent of the student body at Kapi‘olani Community College identified as female and in Fall 2022, 64.5 percent did. Despite the fact that enrollment has declined over the years, the number of students who identify as female has increased by 5.6 percent. As of Fall 2020, there were 511 total employees at Kapi‘olani CC and 282 identified as female, which is 55%. With such an overwhelming majority of individuals who identify as female, it is clear that if UH truly believes in “student success,” they must provide free menstrual products in restrooms on all campuses and education centers.

Lastly, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty. In Fall 2020, KapCC held a “Fuel for Finals” drive in which students were given tickets to choose free basic necessities, like food, menstrual products, toiletries, etc. The most popular items were food and the second most popular were menstrual products, which indicates many of our students experience some degree of period poverty.

SC23 Testimony

**By Julie Rancilio, Professor of History and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Advisor at Kapi‘olani Community College**

While, I support the resolution, it is unfortunate that it does not include the necessary funding. It would be unheard of to pass a resolution, for example, asking the university to provide free toilet paper, and then not allocating the money for it. Menstrual products should not be seen differently than toilet paper. I am hopeful that in the near future the legislature will appropriate money to ensure that menstrual products are freely available on all of the UH campuses and education centers. It is critical that UH and the state of Hawai‘i do its part to helping end period poverty and move us closer to gender equity in higher education.

Providing free menstrual products leads to greater student success. Please vote “yes” to support this resolution and help make UH a leader nationally in promoting public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity for all members of our campus communities.

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

Julie M. Rancilio
Professor of History and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Advisor

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:11:47 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa W. Chong	Testifying for Zen Den Midwifery	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SR23.



The Thirty-Second Legislature, State of Hawaii
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Honorable Chair Donna Mercado Kim
Honorable Vice Chair Michelle Kidani
Committee Members

Thursday, March 16, 2023, 3:00 pm

RE: Support for SR 23 - Requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms.

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

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i **strongly supports SR 23**, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms.

Ma'i Movement Hawai'i is a locally grown organization committed to addressing menstrual inequity and ending period poverty, or the limited or inadequate access to menstrual products or menstrual health education, due to factors including but not limited to financial constraints, negative socio-cultural stigmas associated with menstruation, or inadequate access to clean facilities and running water to maintain proper hygiene. We recognize the all-encompassing societal challenges inherent in tackling the broader issue of period poverty that disproportionately affects students, low-income and houseless girls and women, trans and gender non-conforming individuals, and those that are incarcerated.

We believe that every person has the right to a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, gender equality, and mental and emotional well-being. The inability to access menstrual products due to lack of income, education, stigma, or shame has detrimental effects on all these aspects, thus negatively impacting students' ability to reach their full potential. We have seen it through our [work and pilot](#) with the State of Hawai'i Department of Education and are aware of multiple anecdotal reports that the same is happening in our universities and community colleges.

In the last two years, we have donated nearly 35,000 menstrual products to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu, Hawai'i Community College, University of Hawai'i Maui College, Leeward Community College, Kaua'i Community College, and Windward Community College. Free menstrual products are also available at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Honolulu Community College, and Kapi'olani Community College by way of community donations, student fees via student government, student clubs, and organizations, such as the Honor Society, or university personnel

purchasing menstrual products out-of-pocket. Despite our combined efforts, however, it is not enough to provide equitable access to all menstruators.

As a matter of fact, many of the campuses that we partnered with were already providing free menstrual products for years, but their efforts were fragmented, unconsolidated, and inequitable because of a lack of resources and support from the administration. There has never been a consolidated system-wide effort to address menstrual inequity and period poverty in spite of all the campuses undertaking their own initiatives to provide free menstrual products. SR 23 is an initiative that takes steps to do just that, requiring low investment. The average cost of one menstrual product is \$0.20, and we estimate \$2-\$5 annually per biologically female student based on data from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and Kapi'olani Community College - the only schools with campus-wide access. In our statewide pilot in the Department of Education public and charter schools, the estimated annual cost to provide menstrual products was, on average, \$5 per menstruator, so the estimate is in line with our pilot.

Nationally, new research published by George Mason University's College of Public Health in 2021 found that one in ten college students in the United States is affected by period poverty every month, and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year¹. Compared to menstruators who did not report period poverty, menstruators who experienced period poverty every month were 2.3 times more likely to report depressive symptoms, and those who experienced period poverty in the past year were 1.8 times more likely to report depressive symptoms. The unique set of burdens faced by undergraduate and graduate students experiencing period poverty is compounded by a lack of access to basic resources, such as housing, food, transportation, and access to health care services, including mental health services.

We are particularly concerned with a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i Mānoa that found 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Although this report only highlights issues from a small group of respondents on one campus, it is indicative of the ongoing [issues](#) Hawai'i college students and young adults deal with and continues to face due to inflation and rising house, gas, and food prices. Furthermore, we know from our work that those struggling to meet basic needs will likely 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 them, of which cost was the most cited reason.

The state report also showed the impact of menstruation on full participation in work and school for women and marginalized genders. Half of the respondents have missed school or work because of their period, and specific to education, 42% reported they have had to miss class or leave school because of inadequate access. The report establishes a clear correlation between inadequate access to menstrual products and education, and every individual has the right to an education. All University of Hawai'i campuses have a policy with the same underlying goal and commitment to equal opportunity, affirmative action, and nondiscrimination on the basis of age, race, sex, color, national origin, or disability in its

¹ Cardoso, L.F., Scolese, A.M., Hamidaddin, A. et al. Period poverty and mental health implications among college-aged women in the United States. BMC Women's Health 21, 14 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-020-01149-5>

programs and activities. Moreover, there is a nexus between menstruation with educational opportunities and Title IX². Although Title IX does not explicitly reference menstruation, Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in federally-funded schools and programs, which has the ultimate goal of ensuring equal access to education. With biological females representing nearly 60% of the total student population, or 28,847 students, it is critical that the University of Hawai‘i take action to address the basic needs of the majority of its students, especially when it impacts their ability to access all educational opportunities and activities fully.

Since menstruators do not have the option to cease their period or flow, menstrual products are an essential basic need. 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 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.

Menstrual products are vital for the physical and mental health, well-being, and full participation of menstruators. Unfortunately, they are becoming economically out of reach for a growing number of menstruating girls, women, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals in our State. Failure to consider menstrual needs is a form of sex-based discrimination that disproportionately affects menstruators, and 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](#). [Illinois](#), [California](#), [Connecticut](#), and [Washington DC](#) have already passed legislation to make menstrual products free and available on their university and college campuses.

We urge you to support **SR 23** 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

² Johnson, M. E., Waldman, E. G., & Crawford, B. J. (2020). Title IX & Menstruation. *Harv. JL & Gender*, 43, 225.

PERIOD.

March 15, 2023

Testimony in support of Hawaii Resolution SR23 - REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO SUPPORT ENDING MENSTRUAL INEQUITY BY PROVIDING MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO ALL PERSONS, FREE OF CHARGE, IN ALL UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESTROOMS.

We are writing to testify in strong support of SR23 which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes practical and essential steps to address menstrual inequity for University of Hawai'i students, and allows students impacted by period poverty the opportunity to focus on their academic and extracurricular endeavors.

According to [research](#) led by George Mason University's College of Public Health, nearly **one in ten college students in the US** are affected by period poverty every month, and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year. Compared to those who had never experienced period poverty, those who did were **most likely to report moderate to severe depression**. When students don't have access to period products, they often resort to using other non-safe materials in lieu of menstrual products, use products longer than recommended, or go without any products, impacting their social and emotional health. **Resolution SR23** can help address this direct need for University of Hawaii students.

As a global youth-fueled nonprofit that strives to eradicate period poverty and stigma through service, education, and advocacy, PERIOD. is proud to follow the lead of Hawaiian menstrual equity organizations like the [Mai'i Movement](#) in support of SR23. Our strong network of over 400+ volunteer PERIOD. Chapters around the world support the increased access of free menstrual products in school restrooms, and applaud this resolution as a great example.

We at PERIOD. urge all members of this committee to do what is right and unanimously support SR23 today.

Sincerely,



Michela Bedard
Executive Director
[PERIOD.](#)



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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:54:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brianna Ninomoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of SR23, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I support this resolution because there are around 58% of students who are experiencing some sort basic needs insecurity based upon a study in 2021. As a current college student, I have really appreciated the free feminine products on my campus currently. I believe these products support women and decrease period poverty and insecurity.

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:10:17 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SR23.

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 1:43:54 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani and members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

I am in strong support of SR23. This is an important step towards menstrual equity for members of our community who cannot afford to pay for period products. University students are burdened with all kinds of financial obligations and many of them are parents with children to provide for. Not everyone will need these products at no cost, but we should ensure that those who do need them have access.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 7:29:00 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

There is already an unnecessary and unwarranted shame and stigma around menstruation. There is no need for this to exist and there is no need to add financial shame or burdens on those who need these products. At a time when women's reproductive care is being stripped away, we need measures like this to help protect those who menstruate. It is unacceptable to think of someone having to skip school because they were unable to afford menstruation products. This would help bring equality in the University setting. It is essential.

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 9:06:03 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Agudo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SCR27/SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I support this because I have experienced/witnessed/believe [insert your personal story if you feel comfortable].

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 10:30:02 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

March 14, 2023

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of SR23, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

In 2021, Ma‘i Movement Hawai‘i and the Hawai‘i 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 42% of respondents had missed school or left class early due to their periods, especially because of barriers including cost, knowledge, accessibility, and stigma. Additionally, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity Report for the University of Hawai‘i (UH) found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty. Establishing wider access to free menstrual products on UH campuses and education centers would help to reduce barriers that students face in meeting their basic needs. This resolution encourages an increase in the inclusivity of our university facilities, and promotes greater menstrual equity throughout the UH system.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. 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 UH campuses currently provide soap, toilet paper, and paper towels in their bathrooms (and continue to stock them when vandalism or theft occurs) because those are basic necessities that people need to address their bodily functions. The UH system doesn’t expect non-menstruators to provide their own rolls of toilet paper in each of its buildings, yet it currently does expect menstruators to provide their own menstrual products. This is unfair and has been the status quo for far too long. The University of Hawai‘i can do better, and the students of UH deserve better.

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

Mahalo nui loa,

Sarah Kern

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 12:30:14 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaahu Alo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SCR27**, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I see this as a basic need that should not hinder in their educational pursuit. If we can at least provide for them while they are on campus this will help students stay closer to the campus and maintain their studies. As an employee at a campus our staff has been struggling to supply female products in the few bathrooms we are able to.

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 2:00:51 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Michelle N. Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

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 as well as addressing Period Poverty at the university and community college levels.

I had the opportunity to intern with Ma'i Movement Hawai'i this past summer for one of my capstone classes and I enjoyed it so much that I continue to volunteer with them today; mainly being a point person responsible for coordinating products with the university/cc efforts. I also just completed a policy analysis paper on implementing period products for free at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

I am testifying in strong support of SCR27, which requests the University of Hawaii to support ending menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawaii restrooms. This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campus and end period poverty that requires low investment.

It is important because I have witnessed Period Poverty firsthand. Peers and myself 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. Menstruating college students (may identify with any gender) who are struggling with period poverty often don't know

where/when they can access free menstrual products, so having places at school that spread awareness about period poverty and that provide free products, would be very helpful. This is what made me passionate to end Period Poverty in Hawai'i along with Ma'i Movement.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products.

New research led by George Mason University's College of Public Health found that one in ten college students in the US is affected by period poverty every month and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year. Compared to those who had never experienced period poverty, those who did were most likely to report moderate to severe depression. Furthermore, inadequate access resulted in respondents resorting to coping methods, like using other materials in lieu of products, using products longer than the recommended time, or going without any products.

Lastly, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity report for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty.

The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 7:10:38 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Breanna Zoey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in strong support of **SCR27/SR23**, which request the University of Hawaii to support ending menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawaii restrooms. This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products.

New [research](#) led by George Mason University's College of Public Health found that one in ten college students in the US is affected by period poverty every month and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year. Compared to those who had never experienced period poverty, those who did were most likely to report moderate to severe depression. Furthermore, inadequate access resulted in respondents resorting to coping methods, like using other materials in lieu of products, using products longer than the recommended time, or going without any products.

Lastly, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty.

The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

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

- Breanna Zoey (she/they)

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 8:00:18 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Chou	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

basic needs should be provided to all students

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 9:02:11 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and HRE Committee Members,

As a public health professional and concerned citizen, I write in **strong support of SR23**, which request the University of Hawaii to support ending menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawaii restrooms. This bill is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products.

New [research](#) led by George Mason University's College of Public Health found that one in ten college students in the US is affected by period poverty every month and 14% experienced period poverty in the past year. Compared to those who had never experienced period poverty, those who did were most likely to report moderate to severe depression. Furthermore, inadequate access resulted in respondents resorting to coping methods, like using other materials in lieu of products, using products longer than the recommended time, or going without any products.

Lastly, a 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty.

The bill addresses this issue and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity.

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

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

March 15, 2023

Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of SR 23 REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO SUPPORT ENDING MENSTRUAL INEQUITY BY PROVIDING MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO ALL PERSONS, FREE OF CHARGE, IN ALL UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII RESTROOMS

HEARING: March 16, 2023 at 3:00 pm

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members:

I am testifying in strong support of SR23, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I support this because I believe it is important to provide the equal access to education. Period poverty is a reality and meeting minimum needs by providing free period products will eliminate the invisible barriers to people who menstruate in accessing higher education.

Thank you for consideration of this important issue.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Sharkey", with a stylized, cursive script.

Lauren R. Sharkey
c/o Case Lombardi
737 Bishop Street, Suite 2600
Honolulu, HI 96813

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 11:20:12 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Valencia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I support this because I have observed how the provision of free period products to students in our Hawai'i public schools has helped numerous children and teens improve their ability to attend school, have access to clean and hygienic period products, and avoid any embarrassment by not having access to period products. The support of our students continues beyond graduation from our K-12 public education system and we hope that having access to free period products is a consistent form of support our students/young adults will continue to benefit from.

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

Sincerely,

Robin Valencia

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 11:26:42 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alessandra G Shea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SCR27/SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

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

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 11:54:02 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yuka Polovina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SCR27/SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I am a former reproductive health educator (high school) and have taught at the University of Hawaii for the last decade. From these experiences, I have witnessed the importance of menstrual health and menstrual equity. These issues are not confined to classroom, but rather they impact the entire wellbeing of students. Just as food security is integral to the success of our students, so is their ability to participate in their educational experiences, fully. Menstrual equity is also a matter of basic need.

A 2021 Basic Needs Insecurity [report](#) for the University of Hawai'i found that 58% of students experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity, and 14% experienced homelessness in the previous year. Those that suffer from basic needs insecurity are disproportionately impacted by period poverty.

Mahalo for considering this testimony and the opportunity to submit it.

Yuka Polovina, MPH, PhD

March 16, 2023

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms.

I support this because my students fought for 3 years at the legislature to supply period products in all K-12 Hawaii Public Schools, and I've seen how this has decreased stigma for students, and helped menstruating students take care of their needs at school.

On February 23, 2023 I took students from Ilima Intermediate School to attend "Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day" at UH Manoa. As I was packing for the field trip, I remembered that UH did not offer free period products for students, and I decided to pack some period packs from our school, just in case they were needed.

We spent the day in the Campus Center and Hemmingway Hall for engineering activities. And sure enough, a student ended up needing period products. We went to look in the bathroom and there was a machine that took quarters for products. That machine did have a sign on it that specified we could walk to different locations to find period products on campus. Yet, as the field trip chaperone, I didn't feel comfortable leaving my girls to go in search of products. I also didn't want the girls to leave the important programming.

If I wouldn't have packed additional period products, the student who was menstruating would not have felt confident enough to keep learning with her peers. Sure, while my student was an 8th grader, I have to believe that college students encounter similar experiences. It's just good policy to provide these products so that students can focus on learning. Additionally, since K-12 schools in Hawaii provide these products for students, it's understandable that students expect to have these products in college as well.

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

Sarah “Mili” Milianta-Laffin
Teacher, Ilima Intermediate School

(Photo: Period product machine at UH Manoa on 2/23, and “Period Pack” brought from Ilima Intermediate School.)



SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 1:10:22 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. I work at one of the UH campuses and access to period products is very limited. I believe that the bookstore may sell some products, but it is not open during the hours my students have class. This isn't like the old days when there were vending machines in every bathroom. I personally have gone to Costco pre-Covid and bought huge tubs of tampons to leave in the bathroom in my building. Students did not abuse the privilege and I felt as though I were helping students in need. We don't make students bring their own toilet paper to the bathrooms, so why should we make them bring period products? It isn't always easy for women to predict when their period will start, and it is too easy to be caught short. Support our students!

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 1:14:35 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Y. Nakamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members

I am testifying in support of this bill, which requires the University of Hawai'i to provide menstrual products free of charge to all students on any University of Hawai'i campus, including the community colleges. Every person deserves the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education in an environment that promotes public health equity, education equity, and mental and emotional well-being. Statewide statistics in a 2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i found that 42% of respondents reported missing class or leaving school early due to a lack of accessibility to period products.

While I support the resolution and its passage it is unfortunate that the necessary funding is not included in this resolution. I am hopeful that in the near future the legislature will appropriate money to ensure that menstrual products are freely available on all of the UH campuses and education centers. It is critical that UH do its part in helping to end period poverty and move closer to gender equity in higher education.

Respectfully, Kelli Nakamura



Hawaii Women's Coalition

TO: Senate Committee on Higher Education
Honorable Chair Donna Mercado Kim
Honorable Vice Chair Michelle Kidani
Committee Members

DATE: Thursday, March 16, 2023, 3:00 pm

FROM: Hawai'i Women's Coalition

RE: **Support for SR 23** - Requests the University of Hawai'i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai'i restrooms.

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

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 SR 23**. 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. The [2021 survey conducted by Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women and Ma'i Movement Hawai'i](#) also finds that nearly 30% of respondents reported that they or someone in their household experienced difficulty obtaining period products, of which high cost was the most cited reason.

By providing menstrual products on all campuses at the University of Hawai'i, students have equal access to education and are empowered to reach their full potential, irrespective of their gender or economic status. A lack of access to menstrual products is associated with serious health and social issues, including emotional duress, physical infection, and disease. Research also shows that students with inadequate menstrual support experience higher rates of absence and are less able to focus and engage.



Hawaii Women's Coalition

SR 23 is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity in Hawai‘i and promotes common goals of public health, basic equity, gender equality, and education equity for women, transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming people.

For all of these reasons, the Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition is pleased to support **SR 23**. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Hawai‘i Women’s Coalition

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 1:56:21 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erica Dias	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of SR23, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support ending menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

I support this because I work at Kapi‘olani Community College and have witnessed the importance of free period products to students since at least 2019, and continue to see the need for free menstrual products. In 2019, I attended a presentation on campus by the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK), petitioning Student Congress to provide funding for free menstrual products on campus. I remember being surprised, and very impressed, for several reasons: at the time I had no idea how big of a problem period poverty was/is; menstruation is not a topic typically and openly discussed; and the PTK presenter was a male student. Ultimately, Student Congress provided some funds for PTK to provide menstruation products for our campus; however, this model is not sustainable and requires PTK to seek funding each year from a variety of sources just to be able to continue providing free menstruation products at our campus. Additionally, there is the fear that free menstruation products will disappear. For example, when restrooms on campus are out of stock, students who are "brave enough" to approach staff will ask what happened to the free period products and express concern that the program has been discontinued.

Period products are a basic and essential item; menstruating individuals cannot "opt out" of their period. Sometimes your period sneaks up on you when you don't expect it, and this has personally happened to me at least several times. The fear of leaking on your clothes is very real, and it becomes difficult to concentrate in class or to learn. You don't always know a friend who is carrying period products and can lend you some, or sometimes you are too shame to even ask, especially if you are in a place where you do not know anyone. For those who are unable to afford appropriate period products, they may have to stay home and miss class. Period products are a basic necessity for menstruating individuals, and menstruators should not be fiscally penalized when needing to obtain period products. Period products are already expensive, and when you add the cost of living, food, housing, etc. in Hawai‘i, some individuals may have to choose between eating or purchasing period products. Having period products freely available in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms would help menstruating individuals feel secure knowing there is somewhere they can go to for products should they need them, whether in an emergency,

or because they cannot afford them. Providing free period products to students would help provide a sense of security and safety, and ultimately contribute to student success. Let's work to end menstrual inequity.

Mahalo ā nui for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution.

Erica Dias

SR-23

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 2:54:22 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/16/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ikaika Vares-Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Committee Members,

I am testifying in strong support of **SR23**, which requests the University of Hawai‘i to support menstrual inequity by providing menstrual products to all persons, free of charge, in all University of Hawai‘i restrooms. This resolution is an initiative that takes steps to address menstrual inequity on campuses and end period poverty that requires low investment.

March 15, 2023

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

From: GF Ka'iulani Akamine, 808-258-1148

Re: **In support of SCR 27/SR23**

Aloha

My name is Ka'iulani Akamine and I am submitting testimony as a private citizen but want to draw up my experience as a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i- West O'ahu.

While I believe having a Senate Bill with appropriations would be the best way to truly implement and address menstrual equity, I support SR23, as it helps to bring light to a rarely discussed issue that has a big impact on many of the students at the University of Hawaii at West O'ahu because women comprise 63% of our overall enrollment and many students graduate with student loan debt.

As you already 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. I would be surprised if there was one woman out there who did not experience leakage at least once from their menstrual cycles. When this happens it is not only deeply embarrassing but it may have been the reason for our absence. Absences from a family gathering, attendance at school resulting in missing that project presentation, possibly important lecture time, missing out on earning attendance points towards a passing grade and sometimes it can be a call out from work. During these times women rarely confess - I leaked or the bathroom vending machine only accepted quarters, which I did not have and often even if I did have the quarters, the machines are inoperable and will not dispense the much needed products. Instead we may have to go home or sometimes we just stay home. We say nothing and if we are pressed or required to provide a reason, we just say I was not feeling well.

This 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.

I believe that the State of Hawai'i can be like other progressive countries that already offer period products free of charge such as Scotland, New Zealand and Kenya.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this resolution. Please support menstrual equity and period empowerment and consider hearing a bill next year to support the very much needed appropriations to implement and sustain menstrual equity.

2/10/2023 TESTIMONY

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vic Chair Kapela and members on the Committee

Mahalo for allowing HB481 to have a hearing today. I have already submitted written testimony in strong support of this bill and I do not want to read my testimony again because I trust you have read through my testimony and others that you have received. **Instead I came today to ask for your help. We need your help. Honestly, this is not going to happen without your help.** The caring and motivated faculty, staff and students at UH need your support.

At University of Hawaii - West O'ahu, we have 15 bathrooms on campus not including the gender neutral bathrooms. They are really nice and clean bathrooms. BUT over the last two weeks(because of the various bills that have been created) I have been able to confirm that although the bathrooms have vending machines that can dispense menstrual supplies for .50 cents per piece - the machines have generally been inoperable and they are not stocked with product even if they did work. The vending machines seem to collect quarters but do not dispense tampons. Pads have never been available for those who need to or prefer to use pads. There is a section in the vending machine but they haven't been stocked in years. In fact, I have come to discover that we do not even seem to have those products on campus to re-stock the machines. Our work around is that caring faculty and staff just buy products often with their own money and keep them in our offices to hand out if some brave student comes to inquire about needing them.

So you can see - that now there is an ask to provide these products to be FREE in the bathrooms that this idea seems somewhat crazy to some - needless to say there is a very steep learning curve and growing pains that we need to undergo

I have been a faculty member at the University of Hawaii - West O'ahu for a little over 7 years. I know we need to do better and I am trying to work on this issue on a campus level but I am finding that this is not going to happen without some type of catalyst -without your help. We need this bill, we need a mandate or some type of law to really truly provide menstrual equity at UH. Otherwise we will be caught in a web of red tape and a mound of questions / then : reasons / excuses / issues / challenges why this cannot be implemented.

Let me share an example - I know cost has been brought up as a concern - so I have been able to work with Ma'i foundation over the last couple of weeks and through their hard work, advocacy, and passion. I have been able to get thousands of Free tampons AND pads donated - YAY!!!! The challenge is convincing our facilities department to allow us to place these in the bathrooms where they would be the most accessible and needed. Currently I have been told we need to keep them in our offices to distribute them to people - can you image - everytime you need to go number two you have to go to an office to ask for toilet paper? Anyway with this plan women are still left in uncomfortable situations going on a scavenger hunt to get the supplies they need - we are back to being secret agents figuring out how to request the product and then hide the product on our way to the bathrooms. I guess what I am trying to share is that currently - this is viewed as "something nice to have" versus viewing this as a BASIC NECESSITY.

Passing this bill is a step towards normalizing menstrual equity as a basic need helping everyone (some women included too) to understand something that this is something we NEED to implement. It seems that at the campus I work at - if it is not a mandate - I do not anticipate that we will be able to address this issue adequately.

As mentioned in my statement, UHWO has always had more women enrolled than men, women make up 63% of the population and in the UH system women comprise 58% of the student enrollment.

I am not sure you know but according to the 2021 - 2022 Student Aid Impact Report, the average unmet need per student is \$15,029, 66% of our student population has unmet need and at graduation the average student debt is \$16,958 with 41% of students unfortunately graduating with debt - so - side note if Hawaii Promise comes across your desk - students also need that type of support if we want to address brain drain and diaspora.

Mahalo nui for your commitment and service to the State of Hawai'i! I hope to continue to be a partner helping to foster our building a beloved community.

LATE



Dear Members of the Higher Education Committee,

I serve as the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii (ASUH) and the Chair of the University of Hawaii Student Caucus (UHSC). I express my strong support for the Senate Concurrent Resolution and Senate Resolution recognizing the importance in providing menstrual products across restrooms within the UH System. I am compassionate for this issue not only for its historical and global implications but also because my mother was homeless in her 20's where she slept in churches and bathrooms -these realities are still experienced by countless others.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincerest mahalo to those who introduced and authored the resolutions, especially Senator Kim and her team. With both positions I lead, I balance supporting the needs of +12,000 undergraduates at UH Mānoa and the +50,000 students across the UH System, and more demonstrations of leadership like the advancement of these resolutions need to continue forth.

Providing tampons and pads at no-cost in UH campus restrooms is essential to promoting menstrual equity and ensuring a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for all students. The high cost of living in the State of Hawaii and the financial challenges that many students face can make it difficult to obtain necessary hygiene products, leading to discomfort, embarrassment, and negative impacts on health and academic success.

The Board of Regents (BOR) has the ability to institutionalize this initiative and ensure its long-term sustainability with proper appropriations. UH and the BOR can demonstrate its commitment to wise-procurement practices, keeping the health and well-being of its students in mind with this initiative, which should be viewed as a priority and treated with the same level of importance as providing other essential hygiene products, such as soap, toilet paper, and toilet seat covers.

I am attaching a copy of the ASUH resolution in support of this initiative. I strongly urge the BOR to take action to institutionalize this procurement initiative through a comprehensive revenue assessment, setting a powerful example, nationwide and internationally to follow in the fight against period poverty in a region's public education sector.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Rudy Ramirez

ASUH President, UHSC Chair

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA
2465 Campus Road, Campus Center 211A
Honolulu HI 96822

**SENATE RESOLUTION 12-23 SUPPORTING AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS
THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNDERGRADUATE SENATE:

- WHEREAS,* the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i (ASUH) at Mānoa Senate is the elected body representing approximately 11,000 full-time classified undergraduate students at the flagship institution of the State of Hawai'i; and
- WHEREAS,* the University of Hawaii System, (UH) System, is comprised of ten campuses across the Hawaiian Islands, serving over 50,000 students in higher education, including the Mānoa campus;
- WHEREAS,* the UH System is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for all students;
- WHEREAS,* it is a well-established practice for the UH System to provide essential hygiene products, such as toilet paper and soap, for the well-being of its students, faculty, and staff; and
- WHEREAS,* the UH system's successful implementation of providing bathroom sanitary products has already demonstrated its commitment to the health and well-being of the community, in form of toilet paper, dispensed soap, and seat liners becoming low-cost and simple; and
- WHEREAS,* the cost of living in the State of Hawaii is among the highest in the nation, and many students struggle to make ends meet;
- WHEREAS,* being unable to readily obtain necessary hygiene products can result in discomfort and embarrassment, as well as negative impacts on health and academic success due to makeshift

measures posing toxic shock risks or results in absenteeism in courses from unanticipated menses; and

BE IT RESOLVED,

that the UH System shall provide essential hygiene products, such as menstrual hygiene products; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

that the UH System shall work with appropriate departments and stakeholders to ensure that these products are easily accessible and available in all campus restrooms and common areas, including but not limited to public appropriations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

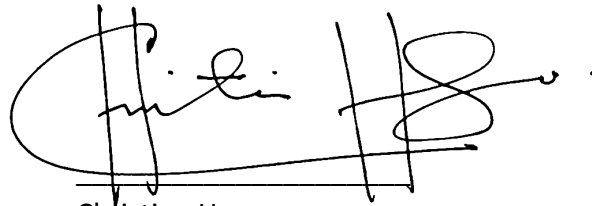
that the UH System shall prioritize implementation that is efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable, exploring all available options, including partnerships with local businesses and organizations, to minimize the financial impact on the UH System and its community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to: the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Randolph Moore and Members, President David Lassner, Provost Michael Bruno and Members of the Provost Council including Vice-Provost for Student Success Dr Lori Ideta, Associate Vice-Provost Student Success & Dean of Students Dr. Theresa Crichfield, the Graduate Student Organization, Kual'i Council, Mānoa Faculty Senate, Mānoa Staff Senate, and Ka Leo O Hawai'i.

INTRODUCED BY



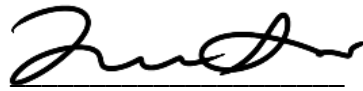
Hayden Kasal-Barsky
Introducing Member
Vice-President



Christian Hermoso
Introducing Member
Senator-At-Large

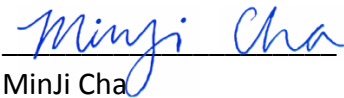


Jason Chen
Introducing Member
Senator-at-Large, Finance Committee



Quinn Goo
Introducing Member
Senator, College of Arts and Sciences

THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED AND ENACTED ON THE 6TH OF MARCH 2023



MinJi Cha
Secretary



Rudy Ramirez
President