

04/16/2021

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and members of the Education Committee,

As a college student and supporter of reproductive rights, I encourage my elected officials to support menstrual equity for all in our state by voting in favor of LD 452. This bill would take us another step towards the goal of menstrual equity by requiring all Maine schools, grades 6-12, to provide menstrual products to high schoolers, ensuring that all students no matter their background have access to these items.

This is an extremely important cause that is personal to me; when I was in high school, I experienced homelessness and poverty. I was unable to buy my own menstrual products for a majority of the time and often had to depend on my school nurse for pads and tampons. If not for my wonderful experience with the staff at my Florida high school, I would have had to use unsafe methods to care for my menstrual health. By providing menstrual products, Maine schools can show that they understand and recognize their students' backgrounds and how it can affect their access to these products.

If all schools in Maine were required to provide menstrual products to their students, nobody would have to stress out about how they could possibly pay to supply their monthly cycle. No child should have to scrounge for change to provide themselves pads and tampons for a biological function that they cannot control. This bill could protect many students from insecurity surrounding poverty and its linkage to the lack of menstrual products.

Thank you for considering my testimony for the LD 452 bill,

Bianca James