



New bill aims to provide feminine hygiene products to students across Tennessee

Story by Ashley Griffin



A Tennessee state lawmaker has introduced a bill to offer students free access to feminine hygiene products at school.

State Rep. Elaine Davis of Knoxville is proposing the Menstrual Hygiene Products Accessibility Act, which would provide feminine hygiene products at no cost to girls in public and charter high schools across the state.

“Menstrual cycles can be unpredictable and every woman knows the awkward feeling of being caught without appropriate period products. This is a situation our young girls should never have to experience, especially at school,” Davis said. “Feminine hygiene products are as essential as toilet paper and are not a luxury. My goal is to bring dignity to these young ladies, keep them healthy, and ensure they can stay in the classroom.”

In the state, public assistance programs do not cover menstrual products. They are currently classified as “non-essential luxury goods” that are taxed.

A national study shows two out of three teens report stress connected to the lack of access to period products while at school. The study uses the phrase “period poverty,” referring to girls having to use toilet paper, rags, and old clothes during their menstrual cycle due to the inability to access sanitary pads, tampons, or other period products.

The new bill proposes feminine hygiene products would be placed in the women's and girl's restrooms, locker rooms, and nurse's office.

Davis' Knox County has implemented a similar initiative across its 13 high schools. Each school has a student representative who monitors the feminine products in school bathrooms and reports when items need to be restocked through a QR code.

The next general assembly meeting will be held on Jan. 14.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/new-bill-aims-to-provide-feminine-hygiene-products-to-students-across-tennessee/ar-AA1wbDdZ>