



SKINNER INTRODUCES NEW LEGISLATION – ‘EQUITY, PERIOD’ – TO REQUIRE FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN-STATE PUBLIC BUILDINGS



State Sen. Nancy Skinner, D-Berkeley, today introduced new legislation to ensure that Californians would have access to free period products in the workplace and in public buildings. Under SB 59 – “Equity, Period” – all state-owned buildings and those that administer state services, along with state-funded hospitals, would provide free menstrual products. The products would be available in women’s and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men’s restroom per building.

“We expect restrooms in public spaces to provide basic essentials for health and sanitation, but this expectation fails to recognize that more than half of our state’s population needs more than toilet paper and hand washing supplies,” said Sen. Skinner, chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus. “The simple act of ensuring access to menstrual products respects an essential bodily function that has been shrouded in shame. Toilet paper is expected to be free and accessible to everyone in our public restrooms. Menstrual products should be treated the same.”

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, vice chair of the Legislative Women’s Caucus, is a principal co-author of SB 59, Equity, Period.

“I am proud to support this important bill by my colleague and Legislative Women’s Caucus Chair, Nancy Skinner,” said Asm. Aguiar-Curry, D-Winters. “I am part of a generation that has let discomfort with a health issue leave



women behind in accommodating what is a normal physical function and the basis for life. Frankly, it's time we get over ourselves and act like adults. As the Vice Chair of the Women's Caucus and the mother of two daughters, it's time we make people's lives easier by providing free menstruation products in state-run and funded facilities."

California has enacted budget and legislative policies to increase access to menstrual products, including ending the tax on these products and requiring that they be provided free of charge in the State Capitol building, at public schools serving grades 6-12, community colleges, and the California State University system. In addition, the 2021 state budget allocated \$2 million to support a free menstrual product distribution pilot program in Los Angeles and San Diego counties.

Equity, Period builds on those important advancements by requiring all state-owned or -leased buildings, all local government-owned buildings that house state-funded safety-net programs, and all hospitals that receive state funding to provide free menstrual products in all women's restrooms and all all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom.

"By providing free menstrual products, Equity, Period advances California's efforts to eliminate gender inequities, and most importantly the legislation gives dignity to an essential bodily function that over half our population experiences on a regular basis for a good portion of their lives."

Sen. Nancy Skinner represents the 9th Senate District and is chair of the Senate Budget Committee and the California Legislative Women's Caucus.

<https://sd09.senate.ca.gov/news/20221219-skinner-introduces-new-legislation-%E2%80%94-equity-period-%E2%80%94-require-free-menstrual-products>