



What to know about the Louisiana bill to provide period products in schools

On Tuesday, April 25, the House Committee on Education moved House Bill 117 to the floor in an effort to make access to mensural products easier for students in public schools.

The bill was created by Rep. Aimee Adatto Freeman, D-New Orleans and co-authored by Rep. Jason Hughes, D-New Orleans. This bill requires public schools in Louisiana to provide free and easy-to-access to menstrual products in bathrooms.

What is HB 117?

In 2022, Freeman created HB 195, which would also require schools to provide free and easy-to-access menstrual products in school bathrooms. The bill was advanced to floor but was stalled.

A year later Freeman is back with HB 117.

Freeman said, "This is the same bill as last year and it just allows menstrual products to be put into schools."

She continued by saying there is an issue with students missing school because they do not have feminine hygiene products available. This bill would require school districts across Louisiana to provide free accessible period products in public school bathrooms.

HB 117 states, "this Act shall be implemented in each school year for which the legislature appropriates funds for this purpose."

On April 25, the committee moved HB 117 to the Senate floor.

What is period poverty?

Period poverty is a widespread problem across the United States and is the inability of a person to afford to purchase safe, clean menstrual products.





Without access to period products, people have reported using rags, baby diapers, or toilet paper to manage the monthly occurrence. The use of non-sanitary period products can lead to serious health issues including urinary tract or bladder infections.

U by Kotex released a study for 2021 stating that two in five women have struggled to purchase period products. These struggles have resulted in over one-third of low-income women reporting missed work, school and other similar priorities due to an inability to obtain even a maxi-pad.

The inability to safely manage a period can lead to a person missing work, or school with the threat of unsanitary smells or breakthrough bleeds. This limits their ability to earn a living, contribute to the local economy, or further their education.

A survey by PERIOD and Thinx, showed one in four students will suffer from period poverty.

<https://www.shreveporttimes.com/story/news/education/2023/04/28/what-to-know-about-the-louisiana-bill-to-provide-period-products-in-schools/70159205007/>