

Sara Koppy
House Committee on Education
RE: Support HB 3294

March 15th, 2021

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Helt, Vice-Chair Neron, and Members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Sara Koppy, I am a student at Southridge High School, and I am a member of the Youth Action Team with Next Up Action Fund. I support HB 3294, which will supply free menstrual products to individuals in educational campuses.

1 in 4 teens miss class due to a lack of menstrual products. This time away from class, and lack of products, can be not only damaging to an individual's education, but can also cause mental and emotional distress. I know this from first hand experience.

I began menstruating at the early age of 9 years old. I was in 3rd grade, and was already confused with the changes that were happening with my body. On top of that, the school bathrooms were not equipped with free menstrual products. Like with any new transition, menstruation takes time learning how to navigate. Oftentimes I would forget to bring hygiene products with me to school, which resulted in many accidents that took time away from my education--such as sitting in the bathroom for 10 minutes scared about the stains on my clothes and taking another 20 minutes to go to the office to borrow new clothes. Other times, I would have to rush back-and-forth between the bathroom and my classroom to retrieve hygiene products from my backpack, which took unnecessary time away from class and led to many embarrassing moments. My experiences are shared amongst many others in Oregon. As a 9 year old girl, I would have benefited greatly had there been free menstrual hygiene products within the schools; especially located within convenient and appropriate places like the bathrooms.

This is a matter of dignity, of health, but most importantly it is a matter of equity. No menstruating individual of any age should feel unsupported in regards to their menstruation within a school. Additionally, no menstruating individual should have to miss abnormal amounts of class time due to an uncontrollable, natural bodily process.

With all of this in mind, I strongly ask for the support of the committee members to pass HB 3294.

Sincerely,
Sara Koppy