

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2825



Introduced by: Hon. Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
PROMOTING MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE BY PROVIDING FREE
MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO INDIGENT WOMEN AND TO GIRLS ENROLLED IN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Every month, more than two billion people around the world menstruate – a normal monthly bleeding that occurs in women as part of the menstrual cycle. Yet, according to the United Nations (UN) Women, an entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, millions of women and girls cannot afford menstrual products to manage their menstrual health and hygiene thereby unjustly interrupting their lives, rights, and freedoms.¹

This sad plight of women and girls is described by the UN Women as period poverty: the inability to afford and access menstrual products, sanitation and hygiene facilities and education and awareness to manage menstrual health.

Based on the Age and Sex Distribution in the Philippine Population (2020 Census of Population and Housing) of the Philippine Statistics Authority, women of reproductive age, that is 15 to 49 years old, totaled to 27.85 million or 51.9 percent of the 53.65 million female household population in 2020.

A study entitled "Period poverty among adolescent girls from the City of Manila, Philippines: Determinants and Impacts on their wellbeing" determines and describes the level of period poverty of 60 adolescent girls from the City of Manila and its association with their socio-demographic, household characteristics, and physiological and psych-emotional well-being.

The study revealed that "almost all respondents are poor, and their parents have low educational attainment. Most have access to water and toilet at home and have a range of one to seven household members. Statistical test results showed that period poverty is evident to adolescent girls. Of the four domains, menstrual hygiene practices yielded a high score, and proper waste management has a moderate score. In contrast, information seeking and pain management practices have a low score. Further, the study showed that certain

¹ Period Poverty – why millions of girls and women cannot afford their periods, 24 May 2024, UN Women (<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-topics/a-splainer/2024/05/period-poverty-why-millions-of-girls-and-women-cannot-afford-their-periods>) Accessed on 09 July 2025

socio-demographic and household characteristics such as family monthly income, parents' occupation, and water source could increase the likelihood of adolescent girls to experience period poverty. Meanwhile, the study revealed that adolescent girls' well-being is at risk during menstruation. The experience of period poverty of adolescent girls, specifically their information seeking behavior, can exacerbate their emotional well-being. This study concludes that girls from an urban poor community and belong to a poor family could heighten their exposure to period poverty, which puts their well-being in poor condition. Further studies on adolescent girls coping strategies in addressing period poverty are recommended, including other determinants should be explored so that policies can be created to protect the well-being of adolescent girls."²

A civil society organization, Humanist Alliance Philippines (HAPI), found that in 2023, 74 percent of women between the ages of 14 and 30 have missed work or school because they did not have access to feminine hygiene products or "felt too embarrassed to leave the house due to the lack of products."³

Menstrual justice advocates and public health experts underscored the urgent need to address period poverty in the country it being a health and economic issue that can hinder participation in the workforce or in school.⁴

In this light, this measure seeks to provide free menstrual health and hygiene products to indigent women nationwide and to girls enrolled in public schools to resolve the issue on the lack of access to sanitary items.

The bill also mandates the promotion and use of Philippine-made menstrual hygiene and health products to foster the domestic industry on sanitary goods.

Overall, this measure seeks to improve the country's human development and its local industries as well as help in the attainment of gender equality, social dignity, and sustainable development goals.

In view thereof, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


IRIS MARIE D. MONTES

Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

² Tapil, J. V. (2021). Period poverty among adolescent girls from the City of Manila, Philippines: Determinants and Impacts on their wellbeing. Retrieved from https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/etdm_behsc/3 Accessed on 09 July 2025

³ Empo-WOMEN-t: Fighting Period Poverty, HAPI Admin, June 21, 2023 (<https://hapihumanist.org/2023/06/21/empo-women-t-fighting-period-poverty/>) Accessed on 09 July 2025

⁴ Advocates, public health experts raise urgent need to address period poverty in PH, University of the Philippines, Philip Jamilla, May 14, 2024 (<https://up.edu.ph/advocates-public-health-experts-raise-urgent-need-to-address-period-poverty-in-ph/>) Accessed on 09 July 2025

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Free Menstrual Products Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health of all Filipinos, regardless of their sex and gender, and instill health consciousness among them, to provide equal access to education and work. It is also the policy of the State to promote gender equality by ensuring girls and women have access to proper menstrual health and hygiene.

SEC. 3. *Distribution of Free Menstrual Products in Public Schools.* - The Department of Health (DOH), in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd), shall provide free menstrual products to female students enrolled in all public primary and secondary schools nationwide.

SEC. 4. *Distribution of Free Menstrual Products in Public Health Centers.* - The DOH, in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Local Government Units (LGUs), shall distribute menstrual products to indigent women, as identified and verified by the DSWD or by the local social welfare and development officer of the LGU, through its Barangay Health Centers nationwide.

SEC. 5. *Promotion of Locally-Made Menstrual Hygiene Products.* - In coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Tatak Pinoy Council, the DOH shall ensure that locally-made menstrual hygiene products are included in the distribution of free menstrual hygiene products depending on availability and in accordance with the provisions of relevant procurement laws.

Guidelines shall be formulated by the DTI and the Tatak Pinoy Council to promote and to develop the domestic menstrual hygiene product industry in line with Republic Act No. 11981.

SEC. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DOH, in consultation and coordination with the DepEd, the DSWD, the DTI shall promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.*- The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the budget of the DOH under the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,