



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wisconsin Installs Menstrual Product Dispensers in State Buildings— A Significant Step Towards Equality**

MADISON – Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) released the following statement regarding the installation of menstrual product dispensers in State Buildings:

“Menstrual products are necessities, not luxuries, and no individual should have to be without them when they are in need— especially in our government buildings. Today, Wisconsin took a significant step towards equality as the Department of Administration, under the leadership of Secretary Joel Brennan and Governor Tony Evers, has completed the installation of menstrual product dispensers throughout Wisconsin state run-buildings.

For far too long, menstruation has been stigmatized, hidden, and treated with shame and derision. The reality is that, on average, individuals who menstruate have their periods for 2,535 days throughout their lifetimes— nearly 7 years of menstruation that requires access to tampons and/or sanitary napkins. Byproducts of this stigma and underrepresentation include laws, norms, and practices that inherently financially penalize menstruation and decrease accessibility to hygiene products.

The ability to manage the normal bodily function of menstruation is essential, not an entitlement or privilege, and is oftentimes an urgent, unexpected need. When those who do not menstruate walk into a public restroom they have everything they need to take care of ordinary bodily functions, while those who do menstruate do not. Further, data from programs around the nation show that the cost of providing these products is significantly less than the cost of soap, toilet paper, paper towel, and other bathroom supplies currently being provided in bathrooms everywhere.

Lacking access to period care has serious implications, from poor health outcomes and lost work and educational instruction hours, to demoralization and embarrassment for those unable to access necessary hygiene products. No one should have to miss work or school, risk their health, or compromise their dignity because they menstruate. It is well past time for the conversation of hygiene product accessibility and equality to be brought to the forefront, as those who menstruate here in Wisconsin should not have to continue to face the undue and unjust burdens of inaccessibility to essential hygiene products.

Menstruation should not be a factor that holds anyone back. Today’s announcement is a win for Wisconsin women and all who menstruate, and in working to create a more fair, just, and equitable Wisconsin. I am proud to have been leading on this issue in my time here in the State Legislature, and I will continue to advocate for menstrual product availability and affordability across our state.”

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*Melissa Sargent is a State Representative in the Wisconsin Assembly, representing the 48th Assembly District, which covers the east and north sides of the city of Madison and the village of Maple Bluff.*