



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Advancing Public Health & Socioeconomic Equity in Our State**

MADISON – Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison), released the following statement regarding the introduction of LRB-2132/1, relating to sales and use tax exemption for diapers, undergarments for incontinence, tampons, and sanitary napkins:

“So many populations across our state use necessary products to control bodily functions and practice proper hygiene. Yet, these populations— people who menstruate, families with infants, people with disabilities, elderly individuals, or those with a bladder condition, among others— continue to face unjust taxation on these needed products.

Under [current Wisconsin law](#), many goods deemed necessities are exempt from sales tax including food, over the counter medication, medical equipment, and fuel and electricity. Yet, many hygiene products, needed for healthy living, are still taxed luxury goods. Menstrual products, diapers, and undergarments for incontinence are not a luxury or optional, they are necessities. LRB-2132/1 simply works to recognize these products as the necessities that they are by creating a sales and use tax exemption for the sale of diapers, undergarments for incontinence, tampons, and sanitary napkins.

Currently in the United States, nearly [1 in 3](#) families in the United States struggles to afford enough diapers. Meanwhile, disposable diapers can cost upwards of [\\$80](#) per month per child. For menstrual products, individuals who menstruate have a period for an average of 2,535 days in their lifetime, or 7 years of requiring access to tampons or sanitary napkins to achieve safe and healthy menstrual hygiene. Furthermore, studies have found that [2 out of 3 people](#) living below the poverty line have experienced being without hygiene products due to costly expenses.

In addition to cost inequities, this taxation can often have large impacts on low income individuals and their health outcomes. Lacking access to the ability to care for bodily functions due to prohibitive costs can have serious implications, from poor health outcomes and lost work and educational instruction hours to demoralization and embarrassment for those unable to afford essential hygiene products.

Ending the tax on these products advances public health and socioeconomic equity in our state. LRB-2132/1 works to bring Wisconsin up to speed with a nationwide movement, and bring fairness to Wisconsin’s tax code, and I am proud introduce this bipartisan legislation.”

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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*

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