

April 29, 2022

The Honorable Grace Meng
United States House of Representatives
2209 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative Meng:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express the AMA's support for H.R. 3614, the "Menstrual Equity for All Act of 2021." This legislation would help assist women and girls, especially among historically underserved and marginalized populations, with obtaining needed menstrual products, including tampons, pads, liners, and other similar products. Menstrual products are a necessity each month for millions of individuals across the United States, yet studies have shown that one in four women and girls reports struggling to afford menstrual products—often referred to as "period poverty"—and one in 10 college students in the U.S. is affected by period poverty.

As part of the bill's comprehensive, multifaceted approach, the AMA is particularly supportive of the following critically needed provisions that would help to alleviate period poverty:

- Incentivizing colleges and universities to implement pilot programs that provide free menstrual products to students;
- Giving states the option to use federal grant funds, which already provide funding for health and wellness efforts, to provide students with free menstrual products in schools;
- Requiring Medicaid to cover the cost of menstrual products;
- Allowing homeless assistance providers to use grant funds that cover shelter necessities (such as blankets and toothbrushes) to also use that money to purchase menstrual products;
- Ensuring that incarcerated individuals and detainees in federal (including immigration detention centers), state, and local facilities have access to free menstrual products, including requiring guidance on distribution; and
- Requiring all public federal buildings, including buildings in the U.S. Capitol complex, to provide free menstrual products in restrooms.

AMA policy recognizes menstrual hygiene products as medical necessities, and new policy adopted by the AMA last year recognizes the adverse physical and mental health consequences of limited access to menstrual products for school-aged individuals. The AMA agrees with you that as necessary and essential items, access to period products needs to be improved. Accordingly, our new policy also supports the inclusion of medically necessary hygiene products within the benefits covered by appropriate public assistance programs and encourages public and private institutions, as well as places of work and education, to provide free, readily available menstrual care products to workers, patrons, and students. In adopting these policies, the AMA acknowledged that being able to access menstrual hygiene products is a

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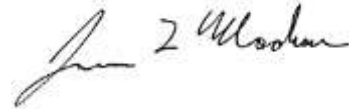
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matter of equity and dignity, as well as health, for low-income and other populations who are disproportionately impacted by period poverty, such as Black, Latina, immigrant, and homeless individuals.

Thank you for your leadership in sponsoring the Menstrual Equity for All Act of 2021. We look forward to working with you to move this important bill forward in Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James L. Madara, MD