


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

23 NOV -8 P 6 :43

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SENATE

S.B. No. 2475

Introduced by Senator Joseph Victor G. Ejercito

AN ACT
PROMOTING MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE BY PROVIDING FREE
MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS TO STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC
HEALTH CENTERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

For so long, we have neglected menstrual rights of girls and women of our country; one of them is denying their right to accessible and affordable menstrual care products.

The lack of discourse on menstrual health care has resulted in discrimination and stigma causing some of our young Filipino students to miss school not only due to shame and embarrassment but also due to unaffordability.

The World Health Organization (WHO) calls for the recognition of menstrual health as a Health and Human Rights issue – a health issue with “physical, psychological, and social dimensions” and one that “needs to be addressed in the perspective of a life course – from before menarche or onset of menstruation to after menopause or the last set of menstruation.”¹

Globally, cultural practices and taboos around menstruation have made great negative impact on the lives of girls and women, thus reinforcing gender inequality and exclusion.

¹ <https://www.who.int/news/item/22-06-2022-who-statement-on-menstrual-health-and-rights>

On November 24, 2020, the Scottish Parliament made impeccable history by being the first country to provide free-of-charge menstrual products² to those who need it.

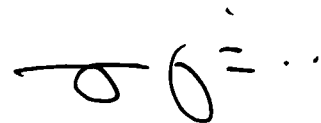
UNICEF stated that, on any given day there are 800 million people who are menstruating³ and yet girls and women in underprivileged communities still experience period poverty.

When people who menstruators-in-need are given equitable access to safe and free menstrual products to manage their menstruation they decrease their risk of infections which have effect on their sexual and reproductive health including reducing teen pregnancy and preventing urinary and reproductive tract infections.

In this proposed measure, the Department of Education will be mandated to provide free menstrual products to female students, and for the Department of Health to provide free menstrual products in every Barangay Health Center for distribution to females who do not have the means to buy.

It is time that we also advocate for the normalization of menstrual health and hygiene needs of menstruators from our country. It is time we prioritize the health of our girls and women by providing free-of-charge menstrual products to public school students and made available in public health centers.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO


² <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-51629880>

³ <https://www.unicef.org.au/stories/800-million>

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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Free Menstrual Products*
2 *Act of 2023*”.

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Principles and Policies.* – It is the policy of the State to
4 protect and promote the right to health of all Filipinos, regardless of their sex and gender,
5 and instill health consciousness among them, to provide equal access to education and
6 work. It is also the policy of the State to promote gender equality by ensuring girls and
7 women have access to proper menstrual health and hygiene.

8 Sec. 3. *Free Menstrual Products in Public Schools.* – The Department of Education
9 (DepEd), through the public primary and secondary schools nationwide, shall provide free
10 menstrual products to female students who may need it.

11 Sec. 4. *Free Menstrual Products in Public Health Centers.* – The Department of
12 Health (DOH), in coordination with the Local Government Units, shall provide free
13 menstrual products in every Barangay Health Center for distribution to females who
14 cannot afford it.

1 *Sec. 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the
2 effectivity of this Act, the DOH, DepEd, and DILG shall jointly issue implementing rules
3 and regulations of this Act.

4 *Sec. 6. Separability Clause.* – If any portion of provision of this Act is declared
5 unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall
6 remain in force and effect.

7 *Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
8 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or
9 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended
10 accordingly.

11 *Sec. 8. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
12 in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,