

**Equity.
Period.**

RE: Support for SB 377 – As it Relates to the Exemption on the Sale of Feminine Hygiene Products from the State Sales Tax

Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 9:30 am, Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

Oral testimony in Support of SB 377 by Izzy Zschoche of Prairie Village, KS, Joining Virtually

Hello, my name is Izzy Zschoche and I live in Prairie Village. I am currently a junior in high school. When I was a freshman, I co-founded Equity.Period. with my friend, Becca Houlehan. We wanted to make a meaningful, local impact so we started by gathering donated period products—pads and tampons—and distributing them to area schools. We soon started attending community outreaches to share products with those facing housing- and economic-insecurities.

I can attest that period poverty is a very real issue that many Kansans face. For example, consider two tampons. To a student whose family can't easily afford period products, two - four - six - eight - tampons makes the difference between going to school or staying home during menstruation. Two tampons. I am quoting a high school nurse who regularly and gratefully receives period products from us when I share this metric.

To date we've donated more than 24,000 pads and tampons to schools alone. More broadly, we've donated more than 51,000 period products in our community. I implore you to calculate how many students we've helped. Think about how many more days of educational and social growth those pads and tampons have supported. Please also consider that we get requests weekly.

Period products by themselves are costly. We know that pads average around 17 cents per item and tampons are about 22 cents each when purchased in larger quantities. In 2023, we spent \$3,300 on pads and tampons for our outreach. Every single dollar was donated or fundraised. And every single purchase also incurred taxes.

Let's say we bought all those products in Kansas. That means a little over \$200 would have been spent on the state sales tax of 6.5% alone, not including additional local sales tax. I've already mentioned that period products average 20 cents per item. That means if we weren't spending money on sales tax, we could have procured more than 1,000 additional period products. And if we go by the school nurse's metric, that is more than 500 school days that could be attended by menstruating students.

Two tampons cost roughly 45 cents. I implore you to remove the burdensome sales tax. It is a very real barrier between attaining education or not. And if two high school students can see this—and do something about it—so can you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.