

Minnesota Psychological Association

4248 Park Glen Road

Minneapolis, MN 55416

(952) 928-4657

info@mnpsych.org

Dear Chair Cheryl Youakim and Chair Laurie Pryor:

Minnesota Psychological Association would like to endorse the passage of the bill to allow financial support for menstrual supplies in bathrooms for girls in public schools. Many of our psychologists work with girls who are impacted by poverty, as well as by mental health issues associated with the onset of menses and the stigma of being female and having limited income. Several studies have shown that girls are maturing younger and the onset of menses starts often in grade school for girls. (See this article <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-are-girls-getting-their-periods-so-young>)

Girls are also likely to have a greater tendency toward depression when affected by early onset menses. (<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/news/20171226/early-puberty-in-girls-may-take-mental-health-tol>) Having the added burden of needing to pay for supplies for her period, while at school, is a health equity issue. This is a health issue that effects female bodies, and it is an unfair burden to have placed on girls as young as seven or eight years old to have to remember to bring money to school in case of getting her period, for which she was unprepared. For these reasons, it makes sense to support the bill to allow girls to have health equity for supplies that they need in public schools.

Sincerely,

Sharon Stein McNamara, Ed.D.,L.P.