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**SR-36** (2023-2024)

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ENROLLED JUNE 08, 2023

PASSED IN SENATE JUNE 08, 2023

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2023–2024 REGULAR SESSION

## SENATE RESOLUTION

**NO. 36**

Introduced by Senator Menjivar

(Coauthors: Senators Alvarado-Gil, Ashby, Blakespear, Caballero, Durazo, Eggman, Hurtado, Limón, Rubio, Skinner, and Smallwood-Cuevas)

May 04, 2023

Relative to Period Poverty Awareness Week.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SR 36, Menjivar.

WHEREAS, Approximately one-half of the population will have a period every month for decades of their lives despite whether they want to or not; and

WHEREAS, Period supplies are a necessary product, each month, for millions of people across the state and country; and

WHEREAS, National surveys and research studies report that one in four women and girls struggle to secure enough period supplies to meet their needs each month due to a lack of income; and

WHEREAS, This lack of period supplies, known as period poverty, can adversely affect the health and well-being of people who menstruate; and

WHEREAS, National surveys also report that one in five women and girls miss work or school due to a lack of sufficient period supplies; and

WHEREAS, Period poverty exacerbates the vicious cycle of poverty by forcing people who menstruate to withdraw from daily life, losing pay or missing educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, People struggling with period poverty risk infections by using proxy products, such as socks or toilet paper, or not changing products as often as needed; and

WHEREAS, The people of California recognize that period poverty is a public health issue, and addressing period poverty can lead to economic opportunity for the state's people and communities and improved health for people who menstruate, thus ensuring all people have access to the basic necessities required to thrive and reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, The California State Legislature passed several important measures to reduce period poverty, including Assembly Bill 10 (Chapter 687, Statutes of 2017) and Assembly Bill 367 (Chapter 664, Statutes of 2021), both authored by Assembly Member and former California Legislative Women's Caucus Chairwoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), which make menstrual products available at all public schools serving grades 6 to 12, inclusive, and all of California's public colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, The Budget Act of 2019 funded the temporary repeal of the period product tax, ensuring that people in California no longer have to pay sales tax on menstrual hygiene products, and in the Budget Act of 2021, this tax repeal was made permanent; and

WHEREAS, The Budget Act of 2021 funded a \$2,000,000 appropriation to support free menstrual product distributions as a pilot in the County of Los Angeles and County of San Diego; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Senate President pro Tempore Atkins, the Legislature began providing for the free provision of menstrual products in State Capitol Building bathrooms; and

WHEREAS, While California is proud to be home to some of the most impactful laws and policies to prevent period poverty, it is recognized that further action is needed to address this long-neglected problem; and

WHEREAS, While experiencing severe increases in demand for period products due to the pandemic and supply chain issues, community organizations serving people suffering from period poverty continue to move mountains to increase period product distributions and support those in need of immediate assistance. California could do more to support these community organizations and to make menstrual products more widely available in elementary schools, libraries, public buildings, parks, and transit hubs; and

WHEREAS, The Menstrual Equity Act of 2023 (Senate Bill 260 of the 2023–24 Regular Session), introduced by Senator Caroline Menjivar (D-San Fernando Valley), these community organizations which is under consideration by the Legislature and is being prioritized by the California Legislative Women's Caucus, would make significant contributions in reducing period poverty; and

WHEREAS, In the United States House of Representatives, the Period Providing Resources for Our Underserved and Disadvantaged (PROUD) Act of 2022, introduced by Congresswoman Grace Meng (D-New York) and Congressman Sean Casten (D-Illinois), would expand accessibility to menstrual products for those with limited access; and

WHEREAS, The State of California thanks period supply banks, their staff, volunteers, and donors for their service to people in our state, encourages the citizens of California to donate to period supply banks and those organizations that collect and distribute period products, and to support local, state, and federal policies that ensure that period products are made widely available in schools, universities, and all public buildings to reduce period poverty among girls, women, and other people who menstruate in an effort to end period poverty once and for all; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the week of May 22 to 28, 2023, inclusive, shall be recognized as Period Poverty Awareness Week; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for distribution.