

**Senate Bill 59**  
**Equity, Period**  
**Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley)**

**THIS BILL**

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We expect restrooms in public spaces to provide basic essentials for health and sanitation, yet over half of our state's population needs more than toilet paper and hand washing supplies. Those with a uterus also need period supplies for health and sanitation.

Anyone who has ever had a period has stories, which they are mostly too ashamed to tell, about their period arriving unexpectedly or not having a tampon or pad accessible. This basic bodily function, and the public need for related supplies, must be recognized and acknowledged. SB 59, "Equity, Period," will do so by ensuring that all state-owned buildings provide free period supplies in restrooms. The bill will reduce the legacy of shame associated with menstruation by normalizing regular and free availability of supplies, and improve equity for our workforce and residents.

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Vice Chair of the Legislative Women's Caucus, is a principal co-author of this legislation.

**ISSUE**

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Despite decades of persistent lawmaking, gender discrimination and stubborn pay gaps persist. Although the gender pay gap has narrowed and California has made nation-leading progress in pay transparency, women earn just 82 cents for every dollar a man earns, according to the latest data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Unequal pay and discriminatory practices are only a fraction of the existing conditions that put women in the workplace on the back foot. Workplaces remain fraught with discriminatory practices, and women continue to be denied necessary basic services, like period products, they require to avoid needless interruptions and stress in their lives. To achieve true equity in the workplace, the state must be able to both understand and solve problems that specifically affect women and gender diverse populations in the workplace.

Menstruation is an essential bodily function, and ensuring that menstrual products are free and available in all state government restrooms recognizes that fact. No one should experience shame associated with being unexpectedly caught without period supplies available. There is no means test for supplying toilet paper in public restrooms – it

is free and accessible to everyone. Period products should be similarly accessible.

California has recognized that access to menstrual supplies is an important public health and economic issue. Our state has enacted the most progressive budget and legislative policies to increase access to period supplies, including ending the tax on products and requiring that they be provided free of charge in at the State Capitol building, at public schools serving grades 3-12, at community colleges, and at the California State University system.

As the Legislature works to further address gender inequity, free and fair access to menstrual supplies must be included in these efforts. SB 59, Equity, Period, will ensure the state is creating safe, sanitary, and inclusive spaces for *its* workers. This bill will have a significant and positive impact on the economic and physical health of the millions of Californians who menstruate.

**SOLUTION**

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Under SB 59, free period products will be offered in all women's restrooms, all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom in all state buildings that are owned and used by the state.

**SUPPORT**

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PERIOD—The Menstrual Movement (Sponsor)  
IGNITE National (Sponsor)  
ACLU California Action  
Access Reproductive Justice  
Alliance for Period Supplies  
California Alternative Payment Program Association  
California Association of Student Councils  
California Coalition of Welfare Rights Organizations  
California Black Health Network  
California Nurse-Midwives Association  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
California Teachers Association  
Sisters on the Streets  
Citizens for Choice  
Community Health Councils  
County of Santa Clara  
Courage California  
Health Access California  
ISSA—The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association  
John Burton Advocates for Youth  
National Association of Social Workers, CA Chapter  
Parity for Pumps  
Plan C

Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee  
Sisters on the Streets  
Universities Allied for Essential Medicines, UCLA  
Chapter

## **CONTACT**

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Jessica.Uzarski@sen.ca.gov  
Office of Senator Nancy Skinner  
(916) 651-4009 | [Jessica.Uzarski@Sen.Ca.Gov](mailto:Jessica.Uzarski@Sen.Ca.Gov)