

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 987

Raising awareness regarding period poverty.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 28, 2020

Ms. MENG submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Raising awareness regarding period poverty.

Whereas National Period Poverty Awareness Week is recognized on May 25 through May 31, 2020;

Whereas, since 2013, Menstrual Hygiene Day is annually commemorated on May 28 to raise awareness and catalyze action around the challenges menstruation poses to individuals around the world;

Whereas more than half of the United States population will likely menstruate every month for decades of their lives;

Whereas menstrual products are a necessity each month for millions of people across the country;

Whereas studies have shown that 1 in 4 women and girls reports that she struggles to afford menstrual products;

Whereas this lack of menstrual products, often called “period poverty”, can adversely affect a person’s health and well-being;

Whereas studies have shown that 1 in 5 women and girls reports missing work or school due to a lack of access to menstrual products;

Whereas period poverty exacerbates the vicious cycle of poverty by further marginalizing those who menstruate, causing them to withdraw from daily life, forego pay, or miss educational opportunities;

Whereas period poverty can increase the risk of infections, because of the use of substitutes, such as paper towels or toilet paper, or because of an inability to change products as frequently as recommended;

Whereas period poverty existed long before the COVID–19 pandemic;

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic has forced millions of people out of work, and thereby exacerbated the socioeconomic and health challenges of individuals facing period poverty;

Whereas menstrual products are essential to the health and economic well-being of individuals in both overcoming and recovering from the COVID–19 pandemic; and

Whereas frontline health care workers in the fight against the COVID–19 pandemic have reported the challenges of working extended shifts in full-body protective gear while managing their periods, and that their overall menstruation needs have been overlooked: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) recognizes the contributions of individuals
2 and entities that operate or support period supply
3 banks and distribution programs in their local com-
4 munities, prior to and in response to the COVID-
5 19 pandemic;

6 (2) recognizes the generosity of the people of
7 the United States for supporting those struggling
8 with period poverty by donating menstrual products;

9 (3) recognizes the contributions of menstrual
10 equity advocates for advancing the menstrual equity
11 movement and policy;

12 (4) encourages the people of the United States
13 to observe National Period Poverty Awareness Week
14 and Menstrual Hygiene Day;

15 (5) calls on relevant Federal agencies, including
16 the Department of Health and Human Services and
17 the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to
18 work with State and local officials to collect data on
19 the menstruation needs of frontline health care
20 workers; and

21 (6) urges local, State, and Federal agencies to
22 ensure free access to menstrual products to individ-
23 uals in need during the COVID-19 response, includ-
24 ing for essential frontline workers, students, low-in-

- 1 come families, individuals experiencing homelessness,
- 2 and incarcerated and detained individuals.

