



Legislative Testimony  
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**Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 6473, An Act Expanding the Diaper Bank to Include Feminine Hygiene Products**

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Ranking Members Berthel and Case, and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Kelly McConney Moore, and I am the interim senior policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 6473, An Act Expanding the Diaper Bank to Include Feminine Hygiene Products. We encourage the Committee to support House Bill 6473.

On any given day, 800,000,000 people on the planet are menstruating. At least 500,000,000 of these people lack adequate resources – from supplies to facilities to information – for managing their periods.<sup>1</sup> Lack of access to adequate period products has serious health impacts: inadequate products can cause infections and toxic shock syndrome, which can lead to increased susceptibility to STIs and hysterectomies.<sup>2</sup>

We cannot have full and equitable participation in society by women and other people who menstruate unless we ensure safe and affordable access to menstrual products to everyone who needs them. Without universal affordable access, people with periods will lose the full ability to work, get an education, and live a complete civic and social life.

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<sup>1</sup> 25 Years: Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2015 Update and MDG Assessment. UNICEF and World Health Organization (2015), *available at* [http://files.unicef.org/publications/files/Progress\\_on\\_Sanitation\\_and\\_Drinking\\_Water\\_2015\\_Update\\_.pdf](http://files.unicef.org/publications/files/Progress_on_Sanitation_and_Drinking_Water_2015_Update_.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See Rochaun Meadows-Fernandez, “Getting Your Period Can Be a Pain. Getting It While Homeless Is Even Worse,” *Yes Magazine* (Jul. 27, 2017), *available at* <https://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/getting-your-period-can-be-a-pain-getting-it-while-homeless-is-even-worse-20170727>. *See also* “The Facts on Tampons – and How to Use Them Safely.” U.S. Food & Drug Admin. (Sept. 12, 2018), *available at* <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/facts-tampons-and-how-use-them-safely>.

For these reasons, House Bill 6473 is vital to ensure equal social and economic opportunities for lower-income people who menstruate. This bill, however, should not exclude anyone with a period. The Diaper Bank's proposed no-cost period products for low-income people should not be limited to women, but instead should include any person who menstruates, which may include men and non-binary people. In recognition of the variety of people who have periods, we encourage this Committee to include the period products this bill contemplates to anyone who needs such products, regardless of gender. We urge this Committee to amend House Bill 6473 to specify that menstrual products should be available regardless of gender, and to support the bill with this amendment.