

Testimony for House Bill 61
Ohio House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee
Tuesday, October 10, 2017

My name is Priscilla R. Tyson; I am a member of Columbus City Council and serve as President Pro Tempore of Council. I am respectfully submitting proponent testimony on behalf of House Bill 61. I thank Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and members of the House Ways and Means Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on this issue.

House Bill 61 exempts feminine hygiene products from sales and use tax. As Chair of Columbus City Council's Health & Human Services Committee, I understand the importance of developing policies that allow all segments of our society to thrive. I have supported initiatives such as one lead by my colleague Councilmember Elizabeth Brown allowing feminine hygiene products to be placed in the City of Columbus' recreation and park facilities. The City is utilizing its resources to ensure the community members who frequent recreation centers and participate in activities have access to hygiene products that they need – just as we provide soap, water, and toilet tissue.

Further, I support Representative Kelly and the information she presented in her sponsor testimony concerning feminine hygiene products being a medical necessity. This committee understood the value of exempting prescription glasses, contact lenses, and other optical aids from sales and use tax and passed legislation to do so. For those of us who wear glasses we understand that they are tools that we need in order to execute our day to day activities such as driving and working, especially when our job requires substantial reading as it does in our legislative roles. I view feminine hygiene products as a necessity in order for those who need them to function. Women would neither be able to come to work without the necessary sanitary resources nor do any task for long durations of time without an accident. While the truth of this matter does not paint a pretty picture it is a reality for women who may have to go without needed products.

Finally, I want to point out that some of our most vulnerable citizens would potentially be impacted by this legislation. For those individuals and families living on a very limited budget every dollar counts - to put this in real terms think about a college student or a mother who is trying to make ends meet. The 19 cents sales tax she would pay for a 16 pack of sanitary napkins (which may not last her entire cycle) at a cost of \$3.27 may be the difference between her being able to purchase a pack of ramen noodles for dinner or going hungry. While this existence may seem bleak it is a reality for some.

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers and members of the House Ways and Means Committee thank-you for considering this important issue. I respectfully urge members of this committee to vote in favor of House Bill 61.



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