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**P.G. Sittenfeld**  
*Councilmember*

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 61, which will exempt from sales and use tax the sale of tampons and other hygiene products related to menstruation.

I am Councilmember PG Sittenfeld, serving the people of the City of Cincinnati. I am the sponsor and author of a June, 2016 Cincinnati City Council Resolution passed 8-0 (with 1 abstention) in support of the Ohio General Assembly's action to abolish the sales tax applied to feminine hygiene products.

It was calculated at such time that a woman in Hamilton County spends an average of over \$800 during her lifetime on such taxes. In addition to the unfair disparity between genders especially when coupled with data showing that women are earning lower wages for the same work than men, women from low income backgrounds are especially disproportionately disadvantaged by this unfair tax on what is effectively a medical necessity that is being treated like a luxury item (and it should be noted that feminine hygiene products are also not covered by food stamps). In fact, our Resolution supported the broader HB 484 which would have provided a sales tax exemption for other essentials like disposable diapers. I understand that this committee recently supported a sales-tax exemption for eyeglasses and contact lenses, which are similarly medically necessary items, and therefore I am confident you understand the logic to be applied in supporting HB 61.

This is a non-partisan issue – as noted my colleagues on both sides of the aisle supported our Resolution in Cincinnati. Ohio would join numerous sales-tax levying governmental entities in addition to the twelve other states across the country in doing the right thing to support our State's women and girls.

My thanks to the committee for allowing me to provide this proponent testimony; I am available for questions should you have any. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue, and I implore you to make life more fair and manageable for the 50% of our constituents for whom this law would be life-changing.

## COMMITTEES