



Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association

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November 21st, 2023

Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways & Means
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House, Room 238
Boston, Massachusetts 02133
(Sent VIA Email Only)

Re: Testimony in Support of An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products in Prisons, Homeless Shelters and Schools HB 534/SB 2491

Dear Chair Michlewitz:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association (MSA), representing the 14 Sheriffs in the Commonwealth, I am writing in my capacity as the Executive Director of the MSA to present our Association's unanimous support of HB 534/SB 2491, as amended, on October 26, 2023 -- *An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products*. In doing so, the Massachusetts Sheriffs respectfully request a favorable Report of this matter by your respective Committee, and urge approval of this measure by the House of Representatives.

"Menstrual equity" defines the national movement to ensure that all menstruating individuals, regardless of their circumstances have access to free menstrual products. The MSA began working with MA Now and the Caucus of Women Legislator's Criminal Justice Involved-Women Task Force staff in anticipation of the initial filing of the legislation, to develop a survey to assess the status of the distribution of free menstrual products at Jails, Houses of Correction, Shelters and Public Schools, where there might be gaps in access as well as strategies/recommendations for how best to address those gaps. With support from the MSA, the Superintendents distributed the surveys to the Jails and Houses of Correction that serve menstruating individuals. The surveys were completed and the Sheriffs remain proud to report that that all of the facilities serving menstruating individuals supply products at no charge.

Refiled this session, the bill has been successfully reported out of Senate Ways and Means and was passed by the Senate on October 26th. The MSA joins with the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Organization of Women (NOW), the Caucus of Women Legislator's Criminal Justice Involved-Women Task Force and advocacy groups across the Commonwealth to draw public attention to the 2023 version of this Legislation.

We support the specific proposal to amend Chapters 23B and 71 of Massachusetts General Law (MGL) to mandate and ensure immediate, accessible and no-cost disposable menstrual products in all licensed Shelters - at public primary and secondary schools, as well as state and county correctional facilities. We view doing so is a matter of Gender-Equity and one that would add Massachusetts to the growing list of States that have addressed the need for menstrual equity in these institutions.

We respectfully request your support of HB 534/SB 2491, An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products in Prisons, Homeless Shelters and Schools.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carrie Hill", is centered on a light beige rectangular background.

Carrie Hill, Executive Director

Cc:

Sheriff Nicholas Cocchi, President
Sheriff Patrick McDermott, Vice President
Sheriff Robert Ogden, Associate Vice President