

# University Assembly

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## Resolution 2: Supporting Universal Access to Menstrual Products

**Abstract:** Advocating for campus-wide installation of free menstrual product dispensers to advance health equity, academic success, and Title IX parity with peer institutions through collaborative implementation.

**Sponsored by:** Christian Tarala '27, Chair of the Campus Welfare Committee

**Reviewed by:** University Assembly Campus Welfare Committee, [ ]/[ ]/2025

**Whereas,** menstrual equity is a public health imperative, and 23% of U.S. college students struggle to afford menstrual products, leading to missed classes and health risks;

**Whereas,** Cornell lags behind peer institutions:

- [Harvard University](#) installed 817 dispensers across campus by 2023, offering organic, chemical-free products after a student-led campaign demonstrated 97% student support.
- [Yale University](#) expanded free products to all 14 residential buildings in 2019 after a pilot showed 74% student demand.
- [Princeton University](#) has provided products in all restrooms since 2019, including men's restrooms, despite initial opposition.
- [MIT](#) saved 470,976 disposable products through its 2021 menstrual cup program while piloting dispensers in academic buildings.
- [Stanford University](#)'s ASSU initiative (2017–2019) stocked gender-neutral and male restrooms with organic cotton tampons, funded by the student government, later transitioned to central administration funding.

**Whereas,** the lack of accessible menstrual products disproportionately impacts low-income students, LGBTQ+ individuals, and international students, exacerbating existing inequities;

**Whereas,** [New York State Human Rights Law](#) prohibits discrimination based on sex, which can be interpreted to include ensuring equitable access to necessary facilities like menstrual products;

**Whereas,** peer institutions like [Boston College](#), [Purdue University](#), and Harvard University have successfully implemented free product programs, with many reporting improved academic engagement and student satisfaction;

**Whereas,** on August 26, 2024, in celebration of Women's Equality Day, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation (S5910B) requiring all SUNY and CUNY schools to provide free menstrual



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products in campus restrooms, which extends to Cornell University's contract colleges and the thousands of New York State students they serve;

**Whereas,** the Student Assembly Appropriations Committee in 2024 discussed the challenges of implementing menstrual product programs, including documented instances where products placed in men's restrooms were found discarded in trash receptacles rather than being used as intended;

**Whereas,** while acknowledging that people of all genders menstruate, the aforementioned program has seen destruction and waste of products in men's restrooms, necessitating a strategic approach that prioritizes women's and gender-neutral restrooms, given limited available resources;

**Whereas,** Cornell University's current provision of menstrual products operates through decentralized college/department-level initiatives rather than a comprehensive campus-wide program.

**Whereas,** the costs of the project are estimated to be as follows, based on [similar projects](#): \$10,000–\$25,000 for 50 dispensers, with annual restocking costs of about \$5,000–\$10,000 contingent on product selection and vendor partnerships, and 5–10 hours/week of labor by facilities staff;

**Whereas,** sustainable implementation requires exploring diverse funding streams, including alumni giving, grant opportunities, and interdepartmental collaboration;

**Whereas,** the Dean of Students has provided some funds to support 14 complexes on the Academic side of the campus, with tampons and pads being provided at both the men's and women's restrooms.

**Be it therefore resolved,** the Campus Welfare Committee calls for the adoption of:

1. A phased implementation plan developed in collaboration with Facilities Management beginning with:

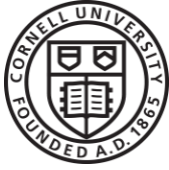
- Pilot program in high-traffic locations (e.g. Libe, Klarman, PSB) by Fall 2025
- Residential coverage by 2026
- Academic building expansion by 2027 contingent on funding availability;

2. Product diversity standards ensuring:

- Minimum 3 options per dispenser (tampons, pads, pantyliners)
- Budget-conscious brand-name selections
- Discreet disposal receptacles;

3. Sustainable funding through:

- Collaboration with Division of Financial Planning to identify existing budgetary allocations



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- Partnerships with Alumni Affairs & Development to establish dedicated giving opportunities
  - Grants from menstrual equity organizations (Period Equity, Ms. Foundation)
  - Phased reduction of third-party vendor reliance through bulk purchasing agreements;
4. A monitoring group that will provide a semesterly report to the University Assembly Campus Welfare Committee, comprising:
- 5 student representatives
    - i. Including the Student Assembly LGBTQ+ Representative
  - 3 facilities/administrative staff
  - 2 Cornell Health advisors
5. Sustainable funding through a combination of:
- Annual allocations from the Cornell Health/Office of Student Services budget;
  - Partnerships with various alumni donors and menstrual equity organizations and companies (e.g., Period Equity, Ms. Foundation, Aunt Flow), which may help reduce product and labor costs;
6. Awareness initiatives co-developed with Cornell Health, including:
- Semesterly workshops on menstrual health
  - Digital map of dispenser locations
  - Multi-year cost-benefit analysis published annually;
7. Initial focus on women's restrooms and single-occupancy restrooms to maximize impact with limited resources, while acknowledging that trans men also menstruate, with potential expansion to men's restrooms contingent upon additional funding and demonstrated success of the initial program.

**Be it finally resolved,** the Campus Welfare Committee urges the University Assembly to endorse this resolution and collaborate with the Office of the President, Division of Financial Planning, Office of Alumni Affairs & Development, and Facilities Management to implement these measures through administrative channels best positioned for long-term sustainability.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christian Tarala '27

*Chair, Campus Welfare Committee of the University Assembly*