

# Proposed Sanitary Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill

## Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

*No Response*

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Glasgow Youth Council

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

## Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Fully Supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

The Glasgow Youth Council policy log, which is debated and voted on by our members at special quarterly meetings, contains the statement: "The Glasgow Youth Council notes the work of Monica Lennon MSP and Scottish Government regarding the provision of Menstrual Hygiene Products; believes that access these products is a basic human right, and that more should be done to ensure that those in disadvantaged financial situations have access to these products. Council therefore resolves to support the Private Members Bill on Period Poverty". This motion was proposed by Suki Wan and amended by Keiran O'Neill. It passed overwhelmingly. As the representative voice of Glasgow's young people, our members have decided that this is an issue we as a Council should be campaigning on, and something that is pressingly important to Glasgow's young people. We think it is a disgrace that many young people in our city have to go without these essential sanitary products, and as a result believe that they should be freely accessible to those who need them at no cost to ensure that young people in Glasgow can live with dignity. GYC also notes that periods are a natural function, and not the choice of the menstruator, so it is wholly unfair that some in our society cannot afford vital sanitary products.

## Page 8: Universal provision of sanitary products

Q2. Do you think a universal, card-based system (modelled on the c-card system for free condoms) would be an effective means of providing sanitary products for free to those who need them?

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Our policy statement does not make this clear. We do, however, believe that menstrual hygiene products should be available to those in disadvantaged financial situations who require them at no cost, and would fully support a card-based system if it was a means to achieving this goal.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view in relation to a card-based system?

The card should be available only to those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

The wording of our policy statement "more should be done to ensure that those in disadvantaged financial situations have access to these products" makes clear that we believe the system should be focused on those who cannot afford these products before those who can. We do, however, believe that the number of products they can claim should be unlimited.

Q4. Do you have a view on which locations would be most suitable for dispensing free sanitary products (e.g. GP surgeries, pharmacies, community centres, health clinics)?

Bathrooms in schools, colleges and universities

GP surgeries and pharmacies

Community centres

Gyms

## Page 11: Schools, colleges and universities

Q5. Do you agree that there should be specific obligations on schools, colleges and universities to make sanitary products available for free (via dispensers in toilets)?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We are an organisation specifically focused on the needs of young people - we believe that access to menstrual hygiene products through school, college and university bathrooms is an effective way to reach this demographic, and therefore think that this obligation is absolutely vital. Young people may be put off accessing this scheme if products were not readily available (i.e. if they had to go to a GP surgery to get them), and so to ensure a high uptake rate amongst disadvantaged young people, we would be fully supportive of this obligation. However, we also note that there should also be an attempt to extend this scheme to young people not in education.

## Page 12: Personal experience (questions 6 and 7 are for individual respondents only)

Q6. Have you ever struggled to access or afford sanitary products during menstruation? (e.g. financial barriers, unexpected circumstances, health issues)

**Please explain or give an example of your experience if you feel able to do so.**

N/A - not an individual respondent

Q7. If sanitary products were available for free, which of the following would apply to you?

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

N/A - not an individual respondent

## Page 14: Financial implications

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

|  | Significant increase in cost | Some increase in cost | Broadly cost-neutral | Some reduction in cost | Significant reduction in cost | Unsure |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| (a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS) |                              | X                     |                      |                        |                               |        |
| (b) Colleges and universities  |                              | X                     |                      |                        |                               |        |
| (c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of)                      |                              | X                     |                      |                        |                               |        |

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

|   |  |  |  |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>sanitary products)</b>   |  |  |  |  |   |  |
| <b>(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)</b> |  |  |  |  | X |  |

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

This scheme would obviously require funding from the government, educational establishments and business taking part, but we believe that this would be money well-spent since it would save those in disadvantaged financial situations a significant amount of money on menstrual hygiene products. Furthermore, it would make them accessible to those who might not be able to afford them at all, so it is definitely a worthwhile investment.

Q9. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

GYC thinks this scheme should only be available to those in "disadvantaged financial situations", and not open to everyone.

## Page 16: Equalities

Q10. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The bill would ensure that those in disadvantaged social and financial situations are able to live with dignity.

Q11. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

Unsure.

## Page 18: Sustainability

Q12. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response:**

We think the money the scheme would require to be sustainable is absolutely a worthwhile investment for the benefits it would bring.

## Page 19: General

Q13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

No.