

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

## Page 2: About you

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

an individual

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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

*No Response*

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Gillian Martin MSP

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?

Partially supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

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

As Monica knows I am supportive of any attempts to tackle period poverty, as a campaigner on this issue myself. The reason I have put my cross against partially supportive is that there are already significant moves to ending period poverty by the Scottish Government as a result of a resolution proposed by myself and Julie Hepburn at SNP National Council in May 2016 and my subsequent lobbying of and discussions with Angela Constance which has resulted in the pilot project in CFine Aberdeen and the announcement by the First Minister that period products will be available in schools, colleges and universities. If this lobbying had been unsuccessful I would have been fully supportive of the Member's Bill proposed. However the government should be allowed to assess the results of the pilot which I am hopeful will result in a nationwide roll out of a scheme to address period poverty.

## 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?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Yes an S Card scheme similar to the C Card scheme mentioned here was the proposal set out by myself and Julie Hepburn at SNP National Council which was unanimously accepted and this model is something that I have been lobbying the Cabinet Secretary on.

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

The card should be available to anyone; card-holders should have unlimited access to free sanitary products

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

I have chosen the first option. A limit may mean the system used may be harder to administrate. Those diagnosed with any condition which requires more products to be available may need more than a women menstruating normally (eg Endometriosis) so a limit might leave these women in difficulty. The admin involved in decalring any reasons for unlimited access would be potentially onerous. I also don't think the system would be abused.

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)?

I think pharmacies are a logical location but personally I would like all supermarkets to offer to be included.

## 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

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)?

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I believe that the First Minister has already announced that this will be the case.

## 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)

Yes, occasionally

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

I would not expect to claim free products

## 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
<b>(a) Government and the public sector (e.g. local authorities, the NHS)</b>		X				
<b>(b) Colleges and universities</b>		X				
<b>(c) Businesses (including suppliers/retailers of sanitary products)</b>		X				
<b>(d) Individuals (including consumers of sanitary products)</b>					X	

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

By including retailers who are supportive of the plan and will commit to assisting with the cost as part of their community engagement.

## 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

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

*No Response*

## 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:**

By the inclusion of reusable products such as Moon/Unicorn cups

## Page 19: General

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

I think the bill is exceptionally well meaning and I am broadly supportive of its aims but feel that the government is already in the midst of tackling the issues and should be allowed to come to a conclusion on that ongoing work. When a government is already doing work on an issue, it could mean that a lot of hard work goes into a bill that is unnecessary. I say this as someone who has just had a Members Bill passed and knows how much hard work goes into the process. I would not like to see a bill fail because of the issues I've raised.