



Realizing potential. For all women.

May 23, 2024

Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1
Email: premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford,

I am writing on behalf of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Ontario Council, a voluntary, self-funded, non-profit, non-partisan Ontario women's organization with 48 clubs and 4,500 members, all seeking to provide life-long learning, improve public policy and advocate for gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

CFUW Ontario Council acknowledges and thanks the Ontario Government for its recent announcement by Labour Minister David Piccini that it will require large provincial construction sites of 20 workers or more where construction is expected to last at least three months to provide menstrual products and mandating that washrooms are clean and sanitary (Ontario news release May 6th, 2024). This reinforces the rights of Ontario women to menstrual equity, that is, equal and comprehensive access to menstrual products, makes the skilled trades more accessible to women and supports women at work. It further supports the 7th recommendation of the November, 2023 report from the Federal Government's House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women *Let's Talk About It, Period: Achieving Menstrual Equity in Canada*.

Furthermore, CFUW Ontario Council appreciates and lauds the Ontario Government's decision in 2021, announced by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, that the Ontario Government would distribute six million free menstrual products per year to school boards under a new and innovative partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart designed to improve access to menstrual products.

In its own news release dated October 08, 2021, the Ontario Government quoted a study from Plan International Canada that *showed 63 per cent of women and girls have regularly or occasionally missed*

an activity because of their period and concerns about not being able to access menstrual hygiene products or proper facilities. The report also noted that 34 per cent of women and girls have had to sacrifice regularly or occasionally something else within their budget to afford menstrual products.

Additionally, in this same news release, Minister Lecce himself stated, “Through the strong advocacy of young leaders in our schools, it has become extremely clear that menstrual products are a necessity, not a luxury.”

However, this partnership is about to end at the conclusion of this school year (2023-2024).

Thus, CFUW Ontario Council urges the Ontario Government **to ensure that all public school boards across Ontario have either 1) adequate funding to continue to provide menstrual products free to its students, and that the money designated is monitored to ensure it is spent on these products, or, 2) that it enter into a new agreement with Shoppers Drug Mart (or equivalent retailer) or extend its current agreement to provide and distribute free menstrual products to school boards (at a level commensurate with previous years), indefinitely.**

Thank you for your continued work to bring menstrual equity to the women of Ontario. We are certain that this government will put the rights of women and girls at the forefront of its policies, ensuring gender mainstreaming is cemented in all its efforts.

Yours Truly,

Teresa Habs

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President, CFUW Ontario Council

Cc The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
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The Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
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Signature


Teresa Habs (May 29, 2024 15:23 EDT)

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