



With school administrators being concerned about theft of menstrual care products, this is huge.



MADISON (WKOW) -- State Representative Melissa Sargent of the 48th Assembly District is re-introducing two bills that she believes will help women. The Hygiene Product Accessibility Act is comprised of two pieces of legislation. One would repeal the five percent state sales tax that is put on menstrual products, and the second bill would mandate all government-owned buildings and facilities to provide tampons and sanitary napkins for free.

"By providing menstrual equality in the state of Wisconsin, we're delivering a message to women and girls in Wisconsin that they are valued," Melissa Sargent

Though this is the second time both bills have been circulated, the Democrat thinks the increase in conversation both nationally and within State Capitol walls will make this time around more successful.

In fact, the representative did a pilot program at Madison East High School where she made tampons and sanitary napkins available for free in the bathrooms.

"The products were very respected," she said. "People weren't taking more than what they needed. Girls and women that work and go to the school were actually able to be back in their classrooms quicker: they felt more valued. The young men that I was able to talk to actually noticed a difference as well."

As for budget concerns people may have on these bills, Representative Sargent said the cost is minimal and would be able to be made up. But, she also added "when we're trying to balance the state budget, we never bring up how much it is that toilet paper is costing the state of Wisconsin in our state facilities. We shouldn't be talking about how much it is that menstrual products are going to be costing the state of Wisconsin, whether it's removing the tax or providing them."

The Democrat says she has already seen support from Republicans on repealing the tampon tax. Her bill will be open for co-sponsorship until November 10, 2017.