



Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys and YWCA Minneapolis  
Supports HF44/SF50 - Submitted January 17, 2023

**Members of the MN House Education Finance Committee & Senate Education Policy Committee:**

Girl Scouts River Valleys is the local council of Girl Scouts of the USA, a registered 501(c)3 organization and the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. Girl Scouts aims to offer every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. Girl Scouts River Valleys serves over 29,000 members.

YWCA Minneapolis is one of more than 200 local associations under YWCA USA, the oldest multicultural organization in the nation, all sharing the mission of eliminating racism, empowering women and girls, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. YWCA Minneapolis provides health and wellness, early childhood education, racial justice and public policy engagement, workforce development, and one of the largest in and out of school time girls & youth programs in the Twin Cities Metro area. YWCA Minneapolis impacted over 15,000 community members in our last fiscal year, including over 700 young people.

We are writing today in support of HF44/SF50 which would require schools to provide menstrual products to students at no cost. Girl Scouts and YWCA have been serving Minnesota for 109 and 130 years respectively and we are uniquely positioned to know the challenges girls face every day.

Period poverty, the inability to afford menstrual products, can result in missed classes which can put a student at risk for chronic absenteeism. A study found one year of chronic absenteeism from 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade was associated with a seven-fold increase in the likelihood of dropping out. Period poverty can also result in stress, embarrassment, shame and even life-threatening health issues. This added pressure comes at a crucial time in development, when major depression is on the rise for teen girls and 70% of US teens suffer from loneliness.

We ask that that you support HF44/SF50 which alleviates a significant burden for youth at a critical time in their lives. We would be happy to further discuss with any of you the details of our support for this issue, please feel free to reach out at any time to Sara Gangelhoff, Advocacy and Community Relations Manager at Girl Scouts River Valleys, [advocacy@girlscoutsrv.org](mailto:advocacy@girlscoutsrv.org) or Luna Allen-Bakerian, Public Policy Manager at YWCA Minneapolis, [luna.ab@ywcamppls.org](mailto:luna.ab@ywcamppls.org).

Thank you for your service on this committee and your attention to this bill.

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