

**HOUSE TAXATION COMMITTEE**  
**Testimony in Support of HB 2461**  
**February 7, 2022**

**Lauren Schmeidler – Wichita, Kansas**

**Remarks – House Taxation Committee on Tax Exemption on Feminine Hygiene Products**

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice-Chairman Mason, Ranking Minority Member Gartner, and members of this committee – thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Lauren Schmeidler, and I am an Ambassador Girl Scout working on my Girl Scout Gold Award, which is the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn. I am a 17-year-old Junior at the Independent School in Wichita – being 17, Harry Potter and J.K. Rowling have been a part of my life, so I think it fitting to start with these remarks from a J.K. Rowling “We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better.”

Imagining better is what we all want – it is why my mom sacrifices for me, it is why you all do what you do every day. I am standing here today to support House Bill 2461 because it is time that we do better, I also support the inclusion of the other healthcare products and feel strongly that none of them should be taxed. When I was younger, learning about what things cost and what we had to pay for, I always thought that things like this should be free – but I will leave that for another discussion on a different day and time (my mom says baby steps)!

When you walk into the store to get a medication that you need, you pay money for it. When you walk into a store and need a feminine hygiene product you pay money for it PLUS an additional fee. Both of these items are a necessity ... so please do the right thing, imagine better.

Since I have been a Girl Scout for 12 years now, since I was in Kindergarten, I have said the Girl Scout Promise and Law probably more than a few times, the simple words have so much meaning that I believe it warrants explaining them here .. the Girl Scout Promise is three small parts, and it starts with On My Honor, I will try – to Serve God and my country, to Help people

at all times and to live by the Girl Scout Law. And that Law goes further to explain that I will do my Best to be Honest and Fair, Friendly and Helpful, Considerate and Caring, Courageous and Strong, and Responsible for what I say and do, and to Respect myself and others, Respect authority, use Resources wisely, Make the World a Better Place and be a Sister to every Girl Scout. ....

You might not be a Girl Scout – but I know that we all try to use our resources wisely, we all try to make this world a better place .. that is probably why you are here, and it is certainly why I am here today.

This bill is good for Kansas – it makes sense, and I support this tax exemption. Some might say that it is not a big expense, so why are we even discussing it? – but is it an equal one? I would say it is not. Feminine hygiene products are a necessity – over the course of a lifetime, the average menstruating Kansan will use 17,000 tampons. That’s 456 periods costing approximately 10 dollars a month (MPRN, 2021), ....so where does the tax burden fall most heavily? Obviously on the lower-income female – is that equality? I would say not. Again – if we can’t make these free, we can do what we can to not make it any harder, and I would hope that you can agree.

It would not be me, if I didn’t end with another quote – this time from Alexander Hamilton – just because, again, I am 17 – its Alexander Hamilton and this IS the taxation committee!.. “There is a Million things I haven’t done – but just you wait.” .... everyone knows this story by now – we can all take a little piece of history and learn from it...we are not talking about liquor or tea tax, but we Can give some equality to Kansas females, we Can make a difference in the lives of many, and we Can make this world a better place one decision at a time!

I am grateful for your time today, God Bless and thank you.

## REFERENCE

Michigan Radio | By Rick Pluta | MPRN. (2021, November 5). *Whitmer signs law to end tax on feminine hygiene products*. Michigan Radio. Retrieved February 6, 2022, from <https://www.michiganradio.org/politics-government/2021-11-04/whitmer-signs-law-to-end-tax-on-feminine-hygiene-products>