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SENATOR MONIQUE LIMON COMMENTS ON COMMITTEE VOTE TO PASS THE EASE ACT

What is SB-10 (the EASE Act)?



During the Business, Law, and Health Committee meeting, on Friday, October 16, Senator Monique Limon of Senate District 21 (which includes some portions of Ventura County, Santa Barbara, and San Louis Obispo) presented SB-10, also otherwise known as the Equitable Access to Sanitary Essentials (EASE) Act. This bill was seeking to expand the definition of the term "eligible items" under supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) benefits, making menstrual and other sanitary products more accessible through SNAP.

There are over 100,000 residents in San Francisco that utilize SNAP/CalFresh benefits, with 52.9% of these residents being women. Although menstrual products are exempt from state and local sales taxes, many woman disproportionally face period poverty. Low-income students, unhoused individuals, and many marginalized groups of women deal with this problem the most. With the high cost of living, hygiene products can compete with food and rent when money is tight.



Many senators, at first seemingly not knowing who the bill was actually for, were shockingly against SB-10, despite the demographics of their districts. However, after discussions with the members of the committee, Senator Limon's bill passed with unanimous support from Democrats and no support from Republicans on committee.

Comments on the Outcome of the EASE Act

Despite it not receiving full support from everyone, Senator Limon was pleased to see SB-10, an important initiative for many Californians, was also deemed necessary to others on the committee as well. She stated, "This act addressed issues that not only affect working women, but families and households. I couldn't be more happy that it passed [...] In the beginning trying to communicate the true purpose of my bill was a little difficult. Nonetheless, I really thankful for all the senators that voted on behalf of my bill. I am hoping to connect with those who didn't to understand their perspective and reasonings for voting nay on the bill."