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Grace Meng

Congress of the United States

Sixth District, New York

March 23, 2016

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
1713 Longworth HOB
H-310 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda
Acting Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
1713 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Honda:

As you begin to draft this year's Commerce, Justice and Related Agencies appropriations legislation, I respectfully request you consider including the following item:

Report Language Request

"The Committee urges the Bureau of Prisons to provide female inmates with feminine hygiene products free-of-charge."

Proper menstruation hygiene management (MHM) is essential to a woman's overall health and BOP should make every effort to ensure that these products are easily accessible. Access to feminine hygiene products (FHP) in sufficient quantities is essential to proper MHM. A review of commissary lists at all federal female facilities reveals that there is no standard to the cost or type of product available, and there are widespread reports that these inmates are not able to afford these items. When women do not have access to FHP in sufficient quantities, they are forced to overuse available FHP or substitute FHP with unsanitary rags and other materials. The potential for reproductive tract infections and toxic shock syndrome is a serious concern; the costs associated with treating these conditions can be easily prevented with increased availability of FHP.

Thank you for your time spent reviewing this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Grace Meng". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Grace Meng
Member of Congress