



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 410

Resolution calling on the New York City Department of Education to create a training program for school nurses and physicians to learn about endometriosis, including formation on systemic racism, bias, and racial and gender-based disparities related to the condition.

By Council Members Louis, Cabán, Gutiérrez, Brewer and Williams

Whereas, Menstruation, a periodic and cyclical shedding of blood and tissue from the uterus, is a normal physiological process in women of reproductive age that begins during adolescence, which is defined by the World Health Organization as the age between 10 and 19 years old; and

Whereas, Menstruation is often associated with physical discomfort and psychological upset that can severely impact daily life; and

Whereas, Endometriosis is a chronic condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus; like endometrial tissue, it thickens, breaks down, and bleeds with each menstrual cycle but with no way to exit the body, it becomes trapped, which can irritate surrounding tissue, eventually developing scar tissue and adhesions that can cause pelvic tissues and organs to stick together; and

Whereas, Common signs and symptoms of endometriosis include painful menstruation, pain with intercourse, pain with bowel movements or urination, excessive bleeding, and infertility, as well as bloating, constipation, diarrhea, fatigue, and nausea, especially during menstruation; and

Whereas, The severity of one's pain may not be a reliable indicator of the extent of the condition and it is commonly mistaken for other conditions that can cause pelvic pain, including pelvic inflammatory disease or ovarian cysts, or even confused with irritable bowel syndrome; and

Whereas, Endometriosis is one of the most common gynecological diseases, affecting one-in-ten

women, yet many women suffer up to a decade before being properly diagnosed; and

Whereas, Historical bias and poorly conducted research have led to the idea that endometriosis is less likely to be diagnosed in certain racial groups, such as Black women; and

Whereas, Medical education has perpetuated stereotypes surrounding Black patients and their experience of pain, which persists across different areas of pain care, with non-white patients receiving lesser quality pain care; and

Whereas, As a result, stereotypes surrounding the prevalence of endometriosis among women of color can cause them to be less likely to seek medical attention for their symptoms; and

Whereas, Menstrual disorders, such as endometriosis, could start as early as menarche sets in and can persist beyond adolescence; and

Whereas, Healthcare providers should reflect on their own potential implicit and explicit bias regarding endometriosis among women of color; and

Whereas, Moreover, it is imperative to limit misinformation among healthcare providers for students so that early intervention for a diagnosis of endometriosis can prevent future suffering; and

Whereas, The New York City (NYC) Council made a commitment toward advancing menstrual equity for students with the passage of Local Law 84 of 2016, which requires the NYC Department of Education (DOE) to make feminine hygiene products available at no cost to students in the bathrooms of school buildings located in facilities that are leased by the DOE or over which DOE has care, custody, and control, serving female students in grades six through twelve; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on New York City Department of Education to create a training program for school nurses and physicians to learn about endometriosis, including formation on systemic racism, bias, and racial and gender-based disparities related to the condition.