

this isn't A LUXURY

Women have been burdened by the cost of their menstrual cycle for centuries, but since the 1990s the burden has been financial

Women everywhere rely on the use of period products like tampons and pads, but even 85 years after the invention of tampons, those who experience a period are being luxury taxed. This 'pink tax' is added to feminine hygiene products like tampons and pads, which is also evident on price tags of necessary items like women's shampoo & conditioner, razors, bras, makeup and countless other essential products.

According to bankrate.com (a New York based financial services company), "The Pink Tax is not actually a tax but rather a system of discriminatory pricing on products and services that is based on gender."

Is the government taxing women purely based on how feminine hygiene products will get purchased either way?

Junior Piper Crawford has grown up with only brothers which has made this tax very real and prominent in her life.

“IT'S A LOT OF MONEY TO BE SPENDING A YEAR, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT HOW WE ONLY BUY IT TO FEEL RESPECTED.”

“Because I have brothers, when I have to get stuff for them and stuff for me, my stuff is so much more expensive to buy. Anything from body wash, shampoo, deodorant, underwear, bras; anything like that,” Crawford said.

Crawford has seen private and woman owned period product businesses on social media, which lead her to think about the female voice on the topic of periods, “I think female voice's are the most important thing in the manufacturing of tampons and pads. Not only have those women most likely experienced a period for many years, but also because of the empathy women can have for other women,” Crawford said.

According to Jeanne Sun, [the general manager of inclusive investing] with J.P. Morgan, “By many estimates, the pink tax costs women an average of \$1,300 annually. If the same amount were invested into a retirement fund each year, that would amount to about \$16,000 over 10 years,” Sun said.

To put this into perspective, according to kidshealth.org the average woman gets her first period at the age of 12. With an average of 468 monthly periods (39 years) left before menopause begins, the women will spend roughly \$50,700 in tax on tampons and pads, as well as the inflated prices women may pay for other hygiene products, as well as clothing.

As far away as this may seem, senior Grace Johnson is very familiar with how close to home this really is.

“It is very unfair and unnecessary for this tax to be added

to female items simply because there is no reasoning behind it that makes sense,” Johnson said.

A woman owned company called “Aunt Flow” sells period products which can be ordered online. Not only does this help people who menstruate avoid luxury tax but, for every 10 tampons (or pads) sold, Aunt Flow donates one box to an organization in need. Many other women owned businesses like Lunar Wild and The Period Company have the same idea in mind when trying to give access to a larger community.

With chatter of the pink tax being revoked, according to The Global Citizen (an advocacy organization directed towards relieving extreme poverty), “The tampon tax is as high as 20% in 10 member countries but it will be eliminated across the member states in 2022.”

The removal of Pink Tax has been a hot topic for decades, and just now it is becoming a foreseeable reality. Gender equality is recognizable in many ways, but the removal of Pink Tax is beneficial in the race for equality as well as relieving a financial burden on Americans who experience menstruation.

PAYING THE PRICE: Period products like tampons and pads have been increasing in price since the early 1990s. According to bankrate.com, the average woman spends over \$1000 per year on hygiene products, including shampoo, razors, tampons and even clothes.



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