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**SENATE BILL 5093**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Wilson, Darneille, Keiser, Hunt, and Kuderer

AN ACT Relating to providing tax relief to females by exempting feminine hygiene products from retail sales and use tax; adding a new section to chapter 82.08 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 82.12 RCW; creating new sections; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that feminine hygiene products are a necessity for most females in the state. Taxing a necessary feminine hygiene product unjustly adds an additional tax burden on females that creates a tax gap between genders, requiring females to potentially pay more of their income to state taxes. The legislature further finds that taxing feminine hygiene products adds to the regressive tax burden on low-income families. The legislature further finds that feminine hygiene products are not a discretionary purchase, they are a necessity for which there is no alternative for females to maintain proper health and hygiene. Therefore, the legislature intends to provide a permanent sales and use tax exemption for feminine hygiene products.

(2)(a) This subsection is the tax preference performance statement for the sales and use tax exemption for feminine hygiene products provided in section 2 of this act. The performance statement is only intended to be used for subsequent evaluation of the tax preference. It is not intended to create a private right of action by any party or be used to determine eligibility to preferential tax treatment.

(b) The legislature categorizes this tax preference as one intended to provide tax relief for certain individuals as indicated in RCW 82.32.808(2)(e).

(c) It is the legislature's specific public policy objective to authorize a permanent sales and use tax exemption for feminine hygiene products to reduce the tax burden on females for a product that is fundamental to personal hygiene and health.

(d) The joint legislative audit and review committee is not required to include the tax preference authorized in section 2 of this act as part of its normal review process of tax preferences. The tax preference authorized in section 2 of this act will be included in the tax exemption report required under RCW 43.06.400 published by the department of revenue.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 82.08 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The tax levied by RCW 82.08.020 does not apply to the sales of feminine hygiene products.

(2) "Feminine hygiene products" means sanitary napkins, tampons, menstrual cups, or any other similar product sold at retail designed specifically to catch menstrual flow either internally or externally.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 82.12 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The tax levied by RCW 82.12.020 does not apply to the use of feminine hygiene products.

(2) "Feminine hygiene products" has the same meaning as provided in section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The expiration date required under RCW 82.32.805 does not apply to the sales and use tax exemptions authorized in sections 2 and 3 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2017.

**--- END ---**