



July 21, 2015

The Honorable Jason M. Lewis  
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health  
State House  
Room 511B  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Lewis:

**The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology (AOCD) and the Massachusetts Osteopathic Society (MOS) are writing to encourage you to support SB 1229.** This bill would prohibit the use of artificial tanning devices by minors under the age of 18. The AOA, AOCD and MOS strongly support restricting the use of tanning devices, which can have serious long-term health consequences including cancer, by minors.

The AOA proudly represents its professional family of more than 109,000 osteopathic physicians and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs, is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools, and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other health care facilities. The AOCD represents over 600 physicians, dermatology residents and student members. It is dedicated to improving the standards of the practice of dermatology, stimulating the study of dermatology and promoting understanding of the nature and scope of services rendered by osteopathic dermatologists. MOS is a professional organization that represents over 900 DOs providing patient care in Massachusetts.

Tanning equipment works by bombarding the skin with ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Tanning salons use lamps that emit UV-A and UV-B radiation, both of which damage the skin and can cause skin cancer.<sup>1</sup> In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a working group of the World Health Organization (WHO), classified UV-emitting tanning devices as a carcinogen, an agent known to cause cancer in humans.<sup>2</sup> In 2012, a study found that indoor tanning can cause the most common form of skin cancer, non-melanoma skin cancer, in addition to the deadliest form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Food and Drug Administration, Indoor Tanning: The Risks of Ultraviolet Rays, May 11, 2010, *available at* <http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm186687.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> IARC, Sunbeds and UV Radiation, July 7, 2009, *available at* [http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/2009/sunbeds\\_uvradiation.php](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/2009/sunbeds_uvradiation.php).

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Fernandez, Tanning Beds Linked to Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer, Oct. 2, 2012, *available at* <http://www.ucsf.edu/news/2012/10/12846/tanning-beds-linked-non-melanoma-skin-cancer>.

The Honorable Jason M. Lewis

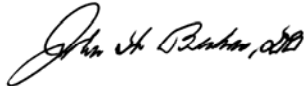
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Prohibiting minors from using tanning equipment is an effective means to protect them from the long-term health risks of these devices. Young people are at a heightened risk of developing skin cancer from indoor tanning, as they subject themselves to additional years of artificial UV exposure.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the WHO and the American Academy of Dermatology recommend banning the use of tanning devices by minors.<sup>5</sup> States that have restricted access to indoor tanning for minors have seen stable or decreased rates of skin cancer, while states without these policies have seen an increase in the same.<sup>6</sup>

The use of tanning equipment by children is inappropriate and should be prohibited due to its long-term health effects. **We urge you to protect Massachusetts' citizens from artificial UV exposure by supporting SB 1229.** Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nicholas Schilligo, MS, AOA Associate Vice President of State Government Affairs, at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,



John W. Becher, DO  
President, AOA



Rick Lin, DO, FAOCD  
President, AOCD



William Foley, DO, MSc  
President, MOS

CC: Boyd R. Buser, DO, AOA President-elect  
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<sup>4</sup> See, Jean-Francois Dore and Marie-Christine Chignol, Tanning Salons and Skin Cancer, Photochem. Photobiol. Sci. 11, 30-37 (2012).

<sup>5</sup> Adam Riker, Nicolas Zea, and Tan Trinh, The Epidemiology, Prevention, and Detection of Melanoma, The Ochsner Journal, 10:56-65 (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Dore, et al., supra.