



March 8, 2018

The Honorable Joshua Miller  
Chairman  
Rhode Island State Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
85 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Chairman Miller:

**The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology (AOCD) and the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (RISOPS) are writing in support of S 2299.** This bill would prohibit the use of artificial tanning devices by persons less than 18 years of age. The AOA, AOCD and RISOPS strongly support restricting the use of tanning devices, which can have serious long-term health consequences including cancer, by minors.

The AOA represents 137,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at [www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org). The AOCD represents nearly 1,000 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. RISOPS is a professional medical organization that represents over 300 DOs providing patient care in Rhode Island.

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> International Agency for Research on Cancer. "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> Fernandez, E. "[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>.

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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 strongly support S 2299 and thank you for your leadership on this important issue.** Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Raine Richards, JD, Director, State Government Affairs at rrichards@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8199.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Baker, DO  
President, AOA



Gregory G. Allen Jr., DO  
President, RISOPS

CC: William S. Mayo, DO, President-elect, AOA  
Joseph M. Yasso, Jr., DO, Chair, Department of Governmental Affairs, AOA  
Thomas L. Ely, DO, Chair, Bureau of State Government Affairs, AOA  
Adrienne White-Faines, MPA, Chief Executive Officer, AOA  
David Pugach, JD, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, AOA  
Raine Richards, JD, Director, State Government Affairs, AOA  
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<sup>4</sup> 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.