May 20, 2013

The Honorable John F. Keenan
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Public Health
Massachusetts State House, Room 413B
24 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Keenan,

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the Massachusetts Osteopathic Society (MOS) and the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology (AOCD) are writing to encourage you to support SB 1105. This bill would prohibit persons under the age of 18 from using a tanning device. The AOA, MOS and AOCD support imposing appropriate safety precautions upon tanning facilities.

The AOA proudly represents its professional family of more than 100,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) 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 colleges; and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other health care facilities. MOS is a divisional (state) society of the AOA that represents the interests of nearly 900 DOs licensed in Massachusetts. 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.

Tanning devices work by bombarding the skin with UV radiation. Tanning facilities use lamps that emit UV-A and UV-B radiation, both of which damage the skin and can cause skin cancer.¹ 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.² Just last year, 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.³

Prohibiting minors from using tanning devices is an effective means to protect them from the long-term health risks associated with indoor tanning. 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. For this reason, the WHO and the American Academy of Dermatology recommend banning the use of tanning devices by minors. 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.

The use of tanning devices by children is inappropriate and should be banned due to its long-term health effects. We urge you to protect Massachusetts’ children from artificial UV exposure by supporting SB 1105 in committee. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nicholas Schilligo, MS, AOA Director of State Government Affairs, at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,

Ray E. Stowers, DO, FACOFP dist. Pamela Grimaldi, DO David Grice, DO, FAOCD
President, AOA President, MOS President, AOCD

CC: Norman E. Vinn, DO, AOA President-elect Mark A. Baker, DO, Chair, AOA Department of Governmental Affairs Joseph A. Gialmo, DO, Chair, AOA Bureau of State Government Affairs John B. Crosby, JD, AOA Executive Director Sydney Olson, AOA Associate Executive Director, Advocacy and Government Relations Linda Mascheri, Director, AOA Department of State, Affiliate and International Affairs Nicholas A. Schilligo, MS, Director, AOA Division of State Government Affairs Amy Bolivar, Manager, AOA Executive Projects and Communications Marsha A. Wise, BS, Executive Director, AOCD Sally Podolski, Executive Director, Massachusetts Osteopathic Society

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6 Dore, et al., supra.