



March 22, 2013

The Honorable Tom Apodaca
Chair, Senate Rules and Operations Committee
NC Senate
16 W. Jones Street, Room 2010
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Chairman Apodaca:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the North Carolina Osteopathic Medical Association (NCOMA) and the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology (AOCD) are writing to encourage you to support H 18. This bill would prohibit operators of tanning facilities from permitting children under the age of 18 to use tanning equipment. The AOA, NCOMA and AOCD support imposing appropriate safety precautions and educational requirements upon tanning device operators.

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. NCOMA is a professional organization that represents over 1,100 DOs providing patient care in North Carolina. 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 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.¹ In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), 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, as well as the deadliest form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma.³

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

² IARC, Sunbeds and UV Radiation, July 7, 2009, *available at* http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/2009/sunbeds_uvradiation.php.

³ 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>.

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.⁴ For this reason, the WHO and the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) recommend banning the use of tanning devices by minors.⁵ 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.⁶

The use of tanning by children is inappropriate and should be banned due to its long-term health effects. **We urge you to protect North Carolina's citizens from artificial UV exposure by supporting H 18.** 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,



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President, AOA



Donald C. Maharty, DO
President, NCOMA



David Grice, DO, FAOCD
President, AOCD

CC: Norman E. Vinn, DO, AOA President-elect
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⁴ See, Jean-Francois Dore and Marie-Christine Chignol, [Tanning Salons and Skin Cancer](#), Photochem. Photobiol. Sci. 11, 30-37 (2012).

⁵ Adam Riker, Nicolas Zea, and Tan Trinh, [The Epidemiology, Prevention, and Detection of Melanoma](#), The Ochsner Journal, 10:56-65 (2010).

⁶ Dore, et al., *supra*.