



March 11, 2013

The Honorable Jane Nelson  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
PO Box 12068  
Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Chairwoman Nelson:

**The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the Texas Osteopathic Medical Association (TOMA) and the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology (AOCD) are writing to strongly encourage you to support SB 329.** This bill would prohibit tanning facilities from allowing children under the age of 18 to use a tanning device. The AOA, TOMA and AOCD support imposing appropriate safety measures 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. TOMA is a professional organization that represents the over 4,000 DOs providing patient care in Texas. 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 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 (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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

<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>.

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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.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the WHO and the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) 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 facilities by children is inappropriate and should be banned due to its long-term health effects. **We urge you to protect Texas' children from artificial UV exposure by supporting SB 329 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.*  
President, AOA



A. Duane Selman, DO  
President, TOMA



David Grice, DO, FAOCD  
President, AOCD

CC: Norman E. Vinn, DO, AOA President-elect  
Mark A. Baker, DO, Chair, AOA Department of Governmental Affairs  
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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*.