



January 30, 2014

The Honorable Kirill Reznik
House Health & Government Operation Committee
House Office Building, Room 225
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
Kirill.reznick@house.state.md.us

RE: HB 0310 Tanning Devices - Use by Minors – Prohibition

On behalf of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland (NPAM), the statewide professional association which represents nearly 4,200 nurse practitioners in Maryland, we offer our support of HB 0310 Tanning Devices – Use by Minors - Prohibition.

Nurse Practitioners are independent healthcare providers who serve the citizens of Maryland. As patient advocates, it is our duty to promote health and prevent illness in our communities. As an organization, NPAM works with legislators to support bills that enhance the well-being of the citizens of Maryland.

HB 0310 addresses prohibiting the use of tanning by those under the age of 18. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, and it is one of the few forms of cancer that is on the rise. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun or from indoor tanning machines has been identified as the principal avoidable risk factor for the development of both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers (NMSC).¹

Despite overwhelming evidence linking UVR to skin cancer, exposure to the sun and indoor tanning machines continues to increase.^{2,3} Multiple studies report that despite repeated health warnings and increased knowledge about the dangers of excessive UVR exposure, many individuals, particularly adolescents and young adults, still use little or no skin protection outdoors and when visiting tanning salons.⁴ Malignant melanoma is most frequently diagnosed in the sixth decade of life and is directly related to sun exposure during childhood and adolescence.

Indoor tanning is prevalent among young people, especially adolescents. Given the potentially cancerous consequences of adolescents' risky tanning behaviors, it is incumbent upon legislators to enforce legislation that will prevent disease and death. Strong clinical evidence

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links indoor tanning to skin cancer, and the tanning industry's documented history of marketing specifically to teenagers supports the need for HB 0310 to ban indoor tanning for children younger than 18 years of age.⁵ The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 imposed a 10% tax on indoor tanning. The American Academy of Dermatology Association has stood by the importance of the tax as an indicator to children under the age of 18 that tanning is a risky behavior with severe consequences, including death.⁶

If you would like to consult with NPAM members who are knowledgeable about these matters, please contact our Executive Director, Beverly Lang, at 888-405-NPAM or NPAMExecDir@npedu.com.

Thank you for considering the support of HB 0310 that will promote healthy behavior among adolescents and prevent the potentially deadly effects of skin cancer.

Sincerely,

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Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland
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1. American Cancer Society. (2009). Cancer Facts and Figures. www.cancer.org .
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5. Grewal, S. K. (2013). Compliance by California tanning facilities with the nations' first statewide ban on use before the age of 18 years. The Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, 69(6), 883-889.
6. Gillen, M. M. & Markey, C. (2012). The role of body image and depression in tanning behaviors and attitudes. Behavioral Medicine, 38(74-82). Doi:10.1080/08964289.2012.685499.

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