

To the Public Health Committee:

I would like to enter testimony on

***S.B. No. 872 (RAISED)** AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF INDOOR TANNING DEVICES BY PERSONS UNDER EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE.

I am a dermatologist with a practice on the shoreline of Connecticut near Hammonasset State Park since 1989.

The sun bathing culture is embraced by generations of my patients.

Our practice of 3 dermatologists diagnosed 60 new melanomas last year. We follow hundreds of patients with a previous diagnosis of melanoma. We are diagnosed and treated more than 500 basal and squamous cell skin cancers last year alone. While the majority of these skin cancers are in ages 40 and above, incredibly, we are seeing them in teenagers and college students.

We ask our patients about their tanning habits. We try to educate our patients to the cumulative nature of sun damage over a lifetime and that UV light exposure prior to adulthood increases skin cancer risk decades later.

Our questions have made us aware that many of our patients have used tanning salons. We have observed that the attraction to tanning and indoor tanning is often shared between generations of families.

An example from my practice is a mom in her 60's with a diagnosis of melanoma and many unusual and concerning moles. Her daughter is in her 30's with similar skin. Both have had to be convinced of the need to protect their skin from ongoing UV exposure. The daughter told me that she used the indoor salons so much in her teens that "doctor, you would not believe how dark my skin was then". She feels that an outright ban on indoor tanning is the only thing that would have stopped her use of the salon at that age which she now regrets. I have had to refer 19 year old young ladies to Moh's surgeons for removal of basal cell skin cancers on delicate areas like their nose or eye areas.

Other moms have asked me to convince their children to stop using the indoor salons because they as parents have been unable to do so. The teens have been influenced by their peers. The parents have asked me to give them reading materials that they can take home to help convince their children to stop indoor tanning.

These patients lend support to my conviction that now is the time to pass a bill to ban indoor tanning for individuals under age 18!

Thank you for the opportunity to share my opinion.

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