



February 20, 2013

Public Health Committee
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: 2013 – SB 872 (Protecting All Minors from Dangers of Tanning Devices)

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee;

AIM at Melanoma urges you to support legislation that would protect minors under 18 from the known dangers of tanning devices. However, we strongly oppose language in SB 872, which allows doctors to prescribe tanning bed sessions.

The World Health Organization labeled UV radiation from tanning devices as “carcinogenic to humans.” They are in the same risk category as cigarettes and CT does not allow anyone under the age of 18 to purchase tobacco products.

The serious risks associated with a tanning device outweigh any possible benefits associated with these dangerous machines. Furthermore, an exception permitting a doctor to prepare a prescription, would allow non-medically trained individuals to perform “medical” treatments in a non-medical environment. In addition, physicians would have no control over the type of wavelength, settings or control over administration.

Inclusion of this language could also set a dangerous precedent. First, it could create a slippery slope by suggesting that the CT Legislature is willing to allow some medical conditions to be treated by non-medical personnel. Second, it could lead to serious medical conditions for some individuals later on in life.

In the last thirty years, the incidence of melanoma among young women has increased as much as 50 percent. Melanoma is now the second most common cancer in women aged 20-29. It is the leading cause of cancer death in women ages 25-30 and is second only to breast cancer in women aged 30-34. The rising rate of melanoma is, in part, due to the popularity of tanning salons among young women. Those who begin tanning before the age of 35 increase their melanoma risk by 87 percent.

In 2013, over 76,000 new melanoma cases will be diagnosed in the U.S. of which 1,080 of those melanoma cases will be reported in CT.

A recent study found that young people who tanned using indoor beds had a 69% increased chance of suffering from early-onset basal cell carcinoma (BCC), the most common form of skin cancer. The authors stated that indoor tanning was strikingly common in the study of young skin cancer patients, especially in women, which they concluded may be the reason why 70% of early-onset BCCs are to meaningful reduction in the incidence of both melanoma (which accounts for the majority of death from skin cancer) and BCC.

The World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Dermatology have recommended that no one under the age of 18 use tanning parlor radiation.

In the interest of protecting teens from the early onset of serious medical conditions, AIM strongly urges you to support an under 18 ban with no doctor prescription exception.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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