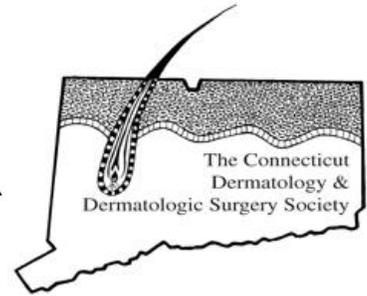
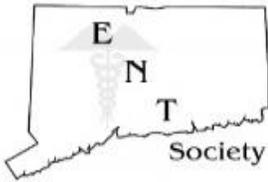




## AMERICAN ACADEMY of DERMATOLOGY | ASSOCIATION



**Testimony by Omar Ibrahimi, MD, PhD  
on behalf of the  
Connecticut Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Society and American Academy of  
Dermatology Association and above mentioned medical societies**

**Public Health Committee  
In Support of SB 219  
Monday, March 5, 2018**

Thank you Chairwoman Gerratana, Chairwoman Somers, Chairman Steinberg, and distinguished members of this committee, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 219. My name is Dr. Omar Ibrahimi and I am a board-certified dermatologist from Stamford. I am here representing the Connecticut Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Society and American Academy of Dermatology Association.

Today's discussion on SB 219 to prohibit all minors in Connecticut from indoor tanning is very timely in light of recent scientific developments that have added to our understanding of the harmful effects of UV radiation from indoor tanning beds.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recognizes the dangers associated with tanning devices as demonstrated by recent actions on this issue. In 2014, the FDA finalized changes to its regulation of tanning beds, including a strong recommendation against the use of tanning beds by minors under the age of 18. This order raises the classification for sunlamps and tanning beds to a Class II level, which institutes stricter regulations to protect public health. Additionally, the order would require tanning bed and lamp manufacturers to label sunlamp products with a visible black-box warning that explicitly states that the sunlamp product should not be used on persons under the age of 18 years.

The causal relationship between UV radiation from tanning beds and the development of skin cancer is based on data from numerous scientific research studies. **And the science is clear – if you use indoor tanning beds, your risk of developing skin cancer significantly increases.**

Studies published in 2012 found that even one indoor tanning session can increase users' risk of developing melanoma by 20 percent, squamous cell carcinoma by 67 percent and basal cell carcinoma by 29 percent. Indoor tanning is particularly dangerous for younger users. People who begin indoor tanning during adolescence have a higher risk of developing melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. Research shows a person who has used tanning beds for more than 50 hours is two and a half to three times more likely to develop this form of cancer than a person who has never tanned indoors.

For all of these reasons, no amount of UV exposure from tanning beds is safe. There is no such thing as a safe tan. By definition, a tan is evidence of skin damage.

Further, in late July 2014, the US Surgeon General issued a Call to Action on skin cancer which identifies opportunities for the government, public and private organizations, health care providers and individuals to raise awareness of skin-protection practices. Specifically, the call to action states that that state laws restricting youths from tanning are effective.

The concept of prohibiting use of carcinogenic or dangerous products is not new. Governments often enact laws in the interest of educating the public and trying to preserve the health and wellbeing of its citizens, especially those such as minors who are easily influenced.

Our government restricts minors' use of tobacco and alcohol for this reason. For something that is classified as dangerous a substance as cigarettes, why do we make an exception for ultraviolet radiation exposure from indoor tanning? We as physicians can only educate the public so much. Our message and recommendations cannot be heard without your help.

In closing, I would like to remind you why prohibiting minors under the age of 18 from using tanning beds is so important. If we wish to have an impact on the future incidence of skin cancer and melanoma, we have to reduce the amount of cumulative exposure our youth have to UV radiation – particularly intentional exposure via commercial indoor tanning.

The Connecticut Dermatology & Dermatologic Surgery Society and American Academy of Dermatology Association believe that protecting the public, especially adolescents, and requiring appropriate oversight of the indoor tanning industry will have a profound effect on improving public health and reducing overall health care costs. Annually, about \$3.3 billion of skin cancer treatment costs are attributable to melanoma. Of course, this figure does not begin to account for the tragic loss of life from this menacing disease.

Since 2013, when Connecticut passed a bill to ban minors under 17, 12 states have passed legislation to prohibit minors under 18 from using indoor tanning beds. I urge you and your colleagues to support SB 219 in order to reinforce the actions taken on the federal level and increase the level of state protection for **all minors** in Connecticut from the dangers of indoor tanning. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.