May 3, 2017

The Honorable Charlie Dent  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2211 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2308 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1124 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Cooper  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1536 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Evan Jenkins  
U.S. House of Representatives  
502 Cannon HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2413 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Dent, Maloney, Joyce, Cooper, Jenkins and DeLauro:

The American Academy of Dermatology Association (Academy), which represents more than 13,500 dermatologists nationwide, would like to express our gratitude for your introduction of H. Res. 282. The Academy is pleased to offer its support for this resolution, which sends a strong message that promoting ultraviolet radiation protection for children is a priority for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Current estimates are that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in his or her lifetime. Experiencing five or more blistering sunburns between ages 15 and 20 increases one’s melanoma risk by a staggering 80 percent and nonmelanoma skin cancer risk by 68 percent.

Because exposure to UV radiation is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, the Academy encourages everyone to protect their skin from the sun’s harmful UV rays by seeking shade, wearing protective clothing and using a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor of 30 or higher.

Children are particularly at risk for skin damage from ultraviolet radiation because their skin is not yet fully developed and because their skin cells are dividing at an accelerated pace compared with adults. Increasing intermittent
sun exposure in childhood and during one’s lifetime is associated with an increased risk of squamous cell carcinoma, basal cell carcinoma and melanoma. The good news is that new research has found that daily sunscreen use can cut the incidence of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, in half.

To prevent skin cancer in the future, a change in our culture, including an understanding of what healthy, attractive skin looks like, is needed. All Americans, and especially physicians, public health agencies, and child care professionals, need to work toward that change. The message that the public receives from its visible leaders and elected officials can also play an important role in this effort. H. Res. 282 demonstrates your commitment, as members of the U.S. House of Representatives, to promote prevention of skin cancer and shift the public understanding of the risks of UV exposure in children.

As leaders of the Congressional Skin Cancer Caucus, you have championed public health policy that enforces strong skin cancer prevention measures. The Academy applauds your leadership and continued commitment to this effort through H. Res. 282.

The Academy is pleased to offer its support for this resolution and urges all Representatives to cosponsor this resolution with the goals of affecting change and promoting sun safety and skin cancer prevention for our nation’s children. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Blake McDonald, the Academy’s Manager, Congressional Policy, at bmcdonald@aad.org or (202) 712-2608.

Sincerely,

Henry Lim, MD, FAAD
President American Academy of Dermatology Association