January 8, 2019

The Honorable Keith Regier
Chairperson, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Montana State Senate
Helena, MT 59620
Delivered electronically: keith.regier@mtleg.gov

RE: Support SB 21 – prohibit use of tanning devices by minors

Dear Chairman Regier:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing approximately 14,500 dermatologists nationwide, we are writing to support SB 21, which would ban the use of tanning devices by minors. As dermatologists, we dedicate our lives to promoting habits in our patients that ensure healthy skin. We are extremely concerned with the long-lasting, harmful impacts of tanning, and urge you and your colleagues to take the necessary steps to protect Montana teens from the dangers of indoor tanning.

Melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, has been linked to indoor tanning. Each year, more than 400,000 cases of skin cancer, including both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer, are linked to indoor tanning in the U.S. alone. A scientific paper entitled Recent Tanning Bed Use: A Risk Factor for Melanoma stated that sun or UV radiation is one of the primary causal factors in the development of melanoma and that indoor tanning increases one’s risk of melanoma. Another study found that individuals who have used a tanning bed 10 or more times in their lives have a 34% increased risk of developing melanoma compared to those who have never used tanning beds. It is estimated that the annual cost of treating skin cancers in the U.S. is estimated at $8.1 billion. Minors, amongst whom tanning is especially dangerous and prevalent, should be restricted from using indoor tanning devices to help protect them from the dangers of skin cancer associated with tanning at a young age.

Age restrictions on indoor tanning work. The U.S. Surgeon General notes that “indoor tanning laws, particularly those that include age restrictions, appear to be effective in reducing indoor tanning among female high school students, who have the highest rates.” According to the CDC’s 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance report, 7.3% of high school students had used an indoor tanning device.

indoor tanning device at least once during the twelve months before the survey,\(^4\) which is why the Surgeon General includes age based tanning laws in the \textit{Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer}.\(^5\)

**Indoor tanning is ranked within the World Health Organization's highest cancer-risk category.** In 2009, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the cancer division of the World Health Organization, classified tanning beds as "carcinogenic to humans" — the agency's highest cancer-risk category, which also includes asbestos, cigarette smoke, plutonium, radon gas and radium. Total doses of ultraviolet rays from a tanning bed may be as much as five times more than natural sunlight. This means that 20 minutes spent in a tanning salon may be equal to 2-3 hours in the noontime sun, according to a 2008 scientific article in \textit{Dermatologic Surgery}.\(^6\) Acknowledging the popularity of indoor tanning amongst teens, the World Health Organization and the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection have recommended that indoor tanning be restricted to only those ages eighteen and older.

For these reasons, we urge the passage of Senate Bill 21. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Emily Ninnemann, ASDSA Manager of Advocacy and Practice Affairs, at (847) 956-9121, or by email at eninnemann@asds.net.

Sincerely,

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