

February 9, 2016

To: Chairman Hawkins and Members of the House Health & Human Services Committee

From: Amy Holdman

For my 40th birthday I received my first Melanoma diagnosis after noticing a mole on my right forearm looked darker and larger than normal. I had been getting head-to-toe mole maps after my dermatologist suggested it, however I have to admit I wasn't really sure of what we were looking for when we did them. I definitely didn't understand what Melanoma was at the age of 40 and had no idea that it was deadly. The day after receiving the call of my Melanoma diagnosis I was sent in to have my lungs scanned and my blood work done to check my lungs and liver to make sure that it hadn't metastasized at that point. Great news is my lungs and liver were both clear. I had surgery within days to remove the cancer from my arm. After receiving clear margins from pathology, I then went to KU to visit with an oncologist to make sure we all agreed that there was no further treatment needed at that time. I was directed to a dermatologist at KU for skin checks every 3 months and checks of my lungs and liver annually.

My first visit at KU they did 4 punch biopsies and unfortunately 2 of the 4 came back Melanoma. I was again scheduled for surgery to have both removed immediately. A plum size section was taken out of one of my arms in order to get clear margins. I was told I was lucky again as I was stage 1. I have had a total of 42 biopsies in the last 12 months.

I am a single mom of two daughters, 8 & 9 years old. **If I could go back to my teens knowing what I know now I would have NEVER gotten into a tanning bed.** One of the first questions asked when I was diagnosed was "Have you ever been a tanning bed user?" My answer is yes. I started in high school before dances or spring break trips. I also tanned in college often.

If I can help educate and keep teens out of the tanning beds until they are old enough to make educated decisions for themselves then I am 100% committed to that. Teens and even a lot of adults do not have a true understanding of Melanoma and how deadly it is.

No tan looks as good as life feels. The thought of my life being cut short now and not being a mother to my children due to the effects of tanning bed use is so unnecessary.