



To: Senate Public Health and Welfare

From: Rachelle Colombo
Director of Government Affairs

Date: March 16, 2016

Subject: HB 2369; prohibiting minors' access to tanning devices

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to offer comments supporting HB 2369, prohibiting minors' access to indoor tanning devices. Seven states, including California, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nevada, Texas, and Vermont have banned minors from indoor tanning altogether, while Kansas remains one of just eight states failing to have passed legislation restricting minors' access to tanning facilities. The reason for this trend towards increased tanning regulation is simple. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from sun and artificial sources is a known carcinogen that is increasingly impacting younger individuals with lasting consequences.

The Skin Cancer Foundation reports that seven of the seven most common cancers in the United States, melanoma is the only one whose incidence is increasing, especially among individuals under the age of 30. From 1970 to 2009, the incidence of melanoma increased 800 percent among young women. The statistics linking early onset skin cancer specifically to indoor tanning are even more alarming.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that people who begin tanning younger than age 35 increase their risk of developing melanoma by 75 percent. Additionally, studies show that excessive exposure to UV radiation can also lead to premature skin aging, immune suppression, eye damage such as cataracts and ocular melanoma as well as other forms of skin cancer. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, resulting in more cases than the combined incidence of breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer. The health risks associated with UV exposure are long-term, serious, and notably: preventable.

Even with growing evidence of increased rates of melanoma in a significantly younger population set, common misconceptions about "safe UV exposure" linger. Indoor tanning is dangerous, particularly so for teens – more than two million of which are estimated to be regular "tanners".

Adults that are informed about their increased risk for developing melanoma or other forms of skin cancer may choose to expose themselves to artificial UV rays, but children should be protected from UV exposure as they are from other known carcinogens, such as nicotine. The Kansas Medical Society supports HB 2369 and urges your favorable consideration of it. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.