



Proponent Testimony HB 169
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Chairman Cutrona, Vice Chair Gross, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the Ohio House Health Provider Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 169. My name is Dr. Jonathan Scharfstein, and I am President of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO). I am also a practicing cardiologist at a major health system in Cleveland.

The AMCNO, founded in 1824, is the region's professional medical association and the oldest professional association in Ohio. We are a non-profit 501(c)6 representing physicians and medical students from all the contiguous counties in Northern Ohio. We are proud to be the stewards of Cleveland's medical community of the past, present, and future. Our mission is to support physicians in being strong advocates for all patients and promote the practice of the highest quality of medicine. On behalf of our nearly 7,000 members and their patients, **I ask you to support HB 169 to prohibit the provision of sun lamp tanning services to individuals under age 18.**

For the past several decades, medical research has proved time and again that use of indoor tanning equipment leads to increased risk of squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma, two forms of skin cancer, as well as ocular melanoma, or cancer of the eye. This occurs through direct exposure to UVA and UVB radiation to darken the skin. UVA radiation is the primary form used in tanning beds which deeply penetrates the skin in a way that can cause genetic damage to your skin cells in addition to skin cancer. UVB radiation is also used which penetrates and damages the outermost layers of your skin.

Not only does indoor tanning greatly increase your risk of developing skin cancer, but this risk also increases when one starts indoor tanning at a young age. One study from the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* on high school students found that **the risk of skin cancer increases by as much as 85% when indoor tanning is used at a young age.**¹ Based on the overwhelming evidence showing the serious risk of indoor tanning to minors, the International Agency for Research on Cancer recommended the banning of commercial indoor tanning for those younger than 18 years old, and the

¹ Coups, E. J., Stapleton, J. L., Davis, C. M. *Frequent indoor tanning among New Jersey high school students*. Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology. [https://www.jaad.org/article/S0190-9622\(15\)00102-4/fulltext](https://www.jaad.org/article/S0190-9622(15)00102-4/fulltext).

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began requiring all tanning beds to carry a warning label stating that people under 18 should not use them.²

We stand in support of this legislation as it could decrease the risk for skin cancer in young Ohioans. A 2020 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, showed that restricting indoor tanning among minors under age 18 may prevent melanoma incidence and mortality, thus saving millions of dollars of treatment costs in the US.³

To be clear, UV radiation is a proven carcinogen. Preventing young Ohioans from UV radiation exposure is a clear way to decrease cancer incidence in our state.

Passage of House Bill 169 is a positive step toward protecting children from the lifelong risks associated with UV tanning. For all these reasons, I urge you to pass this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue. I am happy to answer any questions.

² U.S. Food & Drug Administration. *Indoor Tanning: The Risks of Ultraviolet Rays*.
<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/indoor-tanning-risks-ultraviolet-rays#top>.

³ Gordon, L. G. et al. *Association of Indoor Tanning Regulations With Health and Economic Outcomes in North America and Europe*. *Journal of the American Medical Association*.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7042819/>.