

EXPERTISE IN CLINICAL DERMATOLOGY
AND CUTANEOUS SCIENCE

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Honorable Ross Landry
Chair, Law Amendments Committee

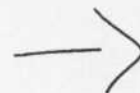
November 29, 2010

Dear Mr. Landry and Members of the Law Amendments Committee:

As Head of the Dalhousie University Division of Clinical Dermatology and Cutaneous Science, and on behalf of the other ten Dermatologists in this Division, I would like to express our wholehearted support of the Bill to restrict the use of tanning beds to those over nineteen years of age.

The scientific data proving that tanning bed use increases the risk of skin cancer, particularly melanoma is very strong, as is the data that shows the higher incidence of melanoma in Nova Scotia. It is time to protect our young population from this carcinogen, by restricting access to minors, just as access to tobacco is restricted.

Dr. Peter Green, one of our Division Members, and Chair of the Sun Safe Nova Scotia Coalition, will be speaking directly with your Committee, and his message of risk to individuals frequenting tanning beds has the full backing of all of the Dermatologists in Nova Scotia. In 2009, based on studies from international cancer experts, the World Health Organization upgraded tanning beds to the highest risk category, which means that tanning beds definitely cause cancer in humans, just as tobacco smoke and mustard gas do. We also applaud that this Bill would require signage in tanning parlors to better educate individuals over the age of 19 to the cumulative risks of artificial



tanning so that they can make better informed decisions that may implicate their future health.

As Dermatologists, we have all witnessed the tragedy of death from melanoma many times, and one just needs to watch one 24 year old new mother succumb to this terrible disease to feel the need to support any measure that might help prevent another similar case. We always try to be health advocates for our patients, and preventive measures such as this are extremely important.

We hope that your Committee looks at the objective scientific data, and votes this Bill into law. Nova Scotia will be a leader on this issue in Canada, and quite likely trigger similar legislation in other provinces. In addition to Doctors Nova Scotia, the Canadian Dermatology Association and the Canadian Medical Association will no doubt applaud Nova Scotia's leadership in this health initiative.

The Dalhousie Division of Clinical Dermatology and Cutaneous Science strongly supports this Bill, and thanks Minister MacDonald for putting it forward.

Yours Sincerely,

Laura Finlayson

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