

Councilmember Yvette Alexander, Chair  
Committee on Health  
District of Columbia Council  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

September 17, 2014

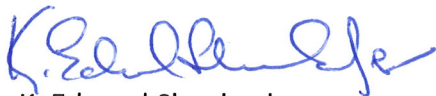
Dear Chair Alexander:

On behalf of the 2,800 members of The Medical Society of the District of Columbia and the thousands of District patients they treat each and every day, I am writing to you to express the Medical Society's support of **B20-0579, The Youth Tanning Safety Act of 2013**. The Medical Society is proud of our longstanding partnership with the DC Council in making our City a safer and healthier place in which to live and work, and passage of this legislation will further those shared goals.

In 2014 there can be little doubt or controversy about the adverse health impacts of tanning. In a City with disproportionately high rates of cancer, we must do all we can to lower the incidence of cancer among our residents. Protecting our youth, as this legislation will do, is one step in the right direction. Sometimes the Council takes up legislation where the science is not clear, or where there are conflicting studies- such is not the case with indoor tanning. You have before you a wealth of scientific studies and information that all conclude that indoor tanning is dangerous and carcinogenic. In fact, according to the American Academy of Dermatology, indoor tanning is as carcinogenic as tobacco use. If no jurisdiction in the country, including our own, allows tobacco use by minors, then why would we turn around and allow minors to use indoor tanning beds? You have heard the Medical Society testify before that if you follow the science, you will do the right thing for District residents and our patients. This legislation is no different- follow the science and you will pass B20-0579 unanimously.

Much work remains to be done in lowering cancer rates in the District of Columbia, but each step we take in that direction will lower cancer morbidity and mortality incidence in our Nation's Capital. The Medical Society strongly believes that passage of this legislation will make a difference and urges its prompt passage. As always, I thank you for your consideration of these remarks and for your efforts to enhance the public health in the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



K. Edward Shanbacker  
Executive Vice President