



Health Committee –Introduced

Andrew Dunn
Justin Hu
Harrison Jones
Xiao Liu
Jade Miller
Alyson Sorensen

Tanning Ban Position
By Dunn

Contact: Andrew Dunn | Milford, IA | adunnsiyac@gmail.com

Position Statement:

The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council supports legislation banning the use of indoor tanning facilities by minors.

Position

It is the position of the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, the voice of Iowa's youth, that legislation banning the use of indoor tanning facilities for those under 18 years of age be enacted. This legislation would improve the health of the state, especially among young adults, because it also calls for increased warnings about the dangers of tanning throughout the facilities. Currently there are no restrictions in place for minors, in the state of Iowa.

Rationale

Many young adults are unaware of the risks of tanning indoors, believing it is safer than lying out in the sun. However this is scientifically unfounded. The radiation emitted by a tanning bed is twelve times more powerful than that of the sun, and prolonged exposure can cause irreversible DNA damage. With so many people viewing tanning beds as a safe alternative to sun exposure, raising awareness on this issue is crucial to the public health.

This bill is supported by a broad coalition of active organizations, including the Iowa Youth Congress, Iowa Medical Society, American Cancer Society, and the Iowa Cancer Consortium (ICC). The ICC has a five-year cancer plan endorsed by Governor Branstad to reduce cancer rates in Iowa. The risk of developing skin cancer rises exponentially for those who start tanning at a young age. From an analysis by the Skin Cancer Foundation of 27 extensive studies, they determined that those who start tanning before age 35 see an 87% increased risk of getting melanoma later in life. Tanning is found to have the same addictive effects on teenagers as cigarettes and alcohol, and it is just as dangerous.

We recognize that those opposed to this legislation may hesitate because it appears to be restricting a business. However, there are alternative options to using ultraviolet-emitting tanning beds that these businesses also offer, such as sunless tanning lotion and spray-on tans. The teenage market for cigarettes has been restricted due to their cancer-causing effects, and the same must be done for tanning. The future health of our state depends on it.

Recommended Action

The indoor tanning restrictions called for in this legislation have been proposed before in the state of Iowa. As advocates for the well-being of our state's young people, SIYAC believe that this is the moment to finally address the issue of tanning bed use among youth and its implications. We ask that the General Assembly consider supporting this legislation during the 2015 legislative session.