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September 24, 2007

Representative Tom Brinkman, Chairman
Commerce and Labor Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
3215 Hardisty Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45208

Dear Chairman Brinkman and Members of the Commerce and Labor Committee:

Re: House Bill #230

More than 1.1 million cases of skin cancer are diagnosed every year in the United States. Physicians estimate that most of these cancers are caused by excessive exposure to ultraviolet radiation from sunlight and, increasingly, tanning beds. The deadliest form of skin cancer, melanoma, is now the second most common cancer in women between the ages of 20 and 29. Most of the UV radiation exposure for these cancers occurs prior to age 18, when teenagers are often under intense peer pressure to appear tanned. I know this from personal experience, having recently raised two children through the teenage years.

The evidence that excessive exposure to UV radiation causes skin cancer is now even stronger than the evidence that smoking causes lung cancer. Moreover, studies have shown that the UV radiation emitted by tanning beds is far more hazardous than UV radiation from natural sunlight. We ban teenagers from buying cigarettes before age 18, because peer pressures can lead kids to become addicted to tobacco before they are old enough to make mature judgments about smoking. Why can't we do the same for tanning?

I urge you to support the prohibition of tanning bed use by persons under age 18 by voting for House Bill #230. This bill is supported by the Ohio State Medical Association, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, and by concerned, knowledgeable parents everywhere. Please help promote children's health and safety and reduce their future cost of health care by voting for House Bill #230.

Thank you,

Sincerely,



Lawrence Barnthouse PHD.