



Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 11, 2009

Howard County, Maryland Passes Historic Teen Tan Ban

Westminster, MD – Through testimony and written support, the Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation was actively involved in passage of the “first in nation” complete ban on teen tanning with regulations unanimously approved on November 10, 2009 by Howard County, Maryland’s Board of Health. Effective November 12, the regulations prohibit “minors’ access to indoor tanning devices as well as regulate the sanitary conditions and operation of tanning facilities.”

JMNMF Board member and melanoma survivor, Jane Shapiro, testified “There’s a 50/50 chance my cancer will return in the first five years. Once melanoma gets into your bloodstream, it can recur anywhere in your body, striking vital organs including the liver, lungs and brain. I live with this every day, wondering if today is the day a few melanoma cells hiding somewhere in my body will start growing and attacking without my even knowing it.”

Jennifer Martin, also a melanoma survivor and Foundation board member stated, “My melanoma skin cancer was found in a lymph node when I was pregnant. Although it was found in only one node, my chances of survival were 50/50 for one year. As a child, I experienced many blistering sunburns and, as a teen, I used tanning beds frequently. I am extremely lucky to have beaten the odds, as I have just passed my ten year anniversary.”

Consensus on the carcinogenic dangers of UV radiation and tanning beds is broad-based and uniform. There are research and statistics cited by many reputable sources, for example, the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) moved UV tanning beds to its highest cancer risk category - "carcinogenic to humans" (Group 1) in June 2009 and in the same report published that “the risk of cutaneous melanoma is increased by 75% when use of tanning devices starts before 30 years of age.” Similarly the U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services published in the *11th Report on Carcinogens* that exposure to sun lamps and sunbeds is “known to be a human carcinogen...and that epidemiological studies have shown that exposure to sunlamps or sunbeds increases the risks of malignant melanoma.”

According to Greg Safko, JMNMF President, “These stark facts are both, indisputable and compelling, as to increased risks for melanoma and death through use of indoor tanning. There are many more statistics to substantiate the need for greater regulation, especially among our youth, but Howard County, Maryland has taken a great stride forward with it’s prohibition on tanning by minors.”

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
...the voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure!



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The Foundation is fully and emphatically supportive of efforts to ban teen use of tanning beds in any and all areas of the U.S. and will continue to align with legislative initiatives to achieve this important youth safeguard. Concluded Shapiro in her testimony for the Howard County Board of Health, “If these regulations save one life or keep one family from the anguish my family has gone through these last two years, it will be well worth it!”

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation’s focuses efforts toward: medical research leading to a cure for melanoma; opportunities to educate the general public on prevention and the seriousness of melanoma; and, the development of resources for patients and the entire melanoma community. The Foundation is very instrumental as “the voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure.”

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