



OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CHAIR

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May 1, 2013

The Honourable Deb Matthews
Minister of Health and Long Term Care
Minister's Office
Hepburn Block - 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto ON M7A2C4

Dear Minister:

Re: Call for Provincial Action on Youth Access to Tanning Beds

On behalf of Niagara Region, I would like to commend you and your government on your recent acknowledgement and commitment to action on the issue of youth access to tanning beds. Niagara Region's Board of Health approved report PHD 29-2012, which called for regulatory action to be taken with the tanning bed industry. We echo your concerns for health and thank your government for taking action to regulate the tanning bed industry by prohibiting marketing and selling tanning bed services to youth under 18, via Bill 30, which is before the legislature at this time.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified tanning beds as known carcinogens. Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada. According to Cancer Care Ontario, the associated costs were over \$344 million dollars in 2011. The evidence is clear that tanning bed use increases the risk for skin cancers including melanoma; this risk is higher with increased use and for those who use tanning beds at a young age.

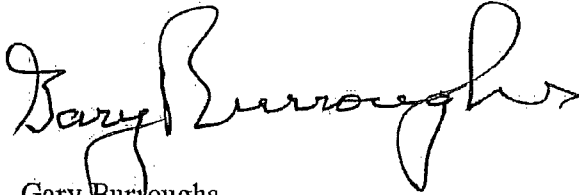
Although the tanning industry and Health Canada have voluntary guidelines for salon owners, we are concerned that they are not stringent enough and are not being followed. In June 2011, an IPSOS Reid survey commissioned from the Canadian Cancer Society showed that:

- 83% of Ontarians support a ban on indoor tanning by youth under 18
- 73% of Ontarians polled said the tanning industry cannot be trusted to regulate itself and that government legislation is required.

Niagara Region's Board of Health is committed to protecting the health of its youth from overexposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR). We recognize that a ban will not reduce outdoor UVR exposure; however it could have tremendous impact by reducing the overall exposure to UVR. We cannot estimate the social norms impact of this legislation, but can anticipate that it will add consistency and reinforce messages around the importance of sun safety.

A recent review of tanning salons in Niagara indicated that there are over 80 tanning salons within our region and 3,500 across the province. These salons are not currently routinely licensed or routinely inspected. Tanning salons are currently part of an unregulated industry that is permitted to provide a service classified as a known carcinogen to youth. To help protect the health of youth, provincial regulation is essential, and we hope that this will happen without delay.

Yours truly,



Gary Burroughs
Regional Chair

C: The Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of the Environment, MPP St. Catharines
Tim Hudak, Leader of the Official Opposition, MPP Niagara West-Glanbrook
Kim Craitor, MPP Niagara Falls
Cindy Forster, MPP Welland
Dr. Arlene King, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Kate Manson-Smith, ADM, Health Promotion Division
Provincial Boards of Health
Mike Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer, Niagara Region
Dr. Valerie Jaeger, Medical Officer of Health, Niagara Region

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