

Jul-19-06 Governor Signs Legislation Limiting Teen Tanning Salon Use

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Anthony Coley
Brendan Gilfillan
609-777-2600

GOVERNOR SIGNS LEGISLATION LIMITING TEEN TANNING SALON USE

NUTLEY - Governor Jon S. Corzine today signed legislation barring the use of tanning facilities by minors under 14 years old. The legislation also bars minors between the ages of 14 and 18 from using tanning facilities without the written authorization of a parent or legal guardian. The written authorization will be required to indicate that the parent or legal guardian has read and understood the safety standards and warnings.

"Sunlamps and tanning beds cause the same cell damage as the sun's UV rays and no one is more vulnerable to UV radiation than our kids," Governor Corzine said. "Today, New Jersey joins the long list of states that have taken steps to protect young people from exposure to the health risks associated with the use of indoor tanning facilities."

The legislation (A-2936) was sponsored by Assemblymen Fred Scalera, Gary Schaer and Herb Conaway. The corresponding Senate legislation (S-1225) was sponsored by Senators Paul Sarlo and Peter Inverso.

"Mounting research indicates that there is an ominous dark side when kids overexpose themselves to ultraviolet rays at a tanning salon," said Assemblyman Scalera (D-Nutley). "The attractive look kids are seeking today can lead to malignant melanoma tomorrow. The notion of kids acquiring a safe and healthy tan is a myth that must be debunked and counteracted."

"Exposure to ultraviolet rays can significantly increase the chances of developing skin cancer, especially in children and teens," said Assemblyman Schaer. "This

law will safeguard our young people from indoor commercial tanning, which is one of the most avoidable risk factors for skin cancer."

"Like smoking in earlier generations, young people often did not realize the long-lasting dangerous effects of overexposure to UV rays until fairly recently," said Senator Sarlo (D-Bergen/Essex/Passaic). "With the medical evidence having become so convincing, we need this law to help warn our young people, who often believe they are immune to the dangers of skin cancer. "

"Damage to the skin during childhood and teenage years is irreversible," said Conaway (D-Burlington/Camden), one of two practicing physicians in the Legislature. "Overexposure to ultraviolet waves accelerates premature aging and increases a person's risk for skin cancer. It's important for people -- especially teenagers -- to know how dangerous ultraviolet light can be."

"A suntan is not just a healthy glow," Senator Inverso said. "This law will put in place reasonable precautions to protect young people from eye damage and potentially fatal skin diseases."

Initial offenses by tanning facilities will incur a penalty of \$100. Subsequent offenses will incur \$200 penalties. The penalties will be enforced by the Department of Health and Senior Services or by the local board of health.