

The James



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Testimony before the Ohio House Health Committee

Supporting HB 159

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Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony in support of HB 159. We commend Representatives Hillyer and Lightbody for introducing this important legislation.

The only freestanding cancer hospital in central Ohio and the first in the Midwest, the OSUCCC – James is an international leader in cancer prevention, detection and treatment. Understanding that no cancer is routine because every case is biologically different, OSUCCC –James physicians and scientists focus on basic, clinical and translational research to determine the molecular origin of each person’s cancer and how best to treat it, leading to better outcomes, fewer side effects and more hope. The OSUCCC – James is the only cancer program in the United States that features a National Cancer Institute (NCI)–designated comprehensive cancer center aligned with a nationally ranked academic medical center and a freestanding cancer hospital on the campus of one of the nation’s largest public universities.

The OSUCCC – James supports passage of HB 159. The legislation would prohibit the use of sun lamp tanning services for individuals under 18 years of age.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services has documented ultraviolet radiation (UVR) as a known carcinogen, and it is believed that nearly 90 percent of all skin cancers are caused by UVR. Skin cancer, the most commonly occurring cancer in the United States, affects over one million Americans a year. It accounts for half of *all* diagnosed cancers and about 2 percent of all cancer deaths.

Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer, and it is responsible for a majority of skin cancer deaths. Of those who develop melanoma, one in four is under the age of 40. Recent studies indicate melanoma is now the most common cancer in young women between ages 25 and 29. It is because of early risk behavior, such as artificial UVR exposure in tanning beds, that melanoma diagnosis is up 75 percent for individuals who begin using tanning beds in their teens or 20s. Additionally, new high- pressure sunlamps produce as much as 12 times the annual UVA dose for frequent users as compared to natural sun exposure.

The medical community recommends that young people avoid unnecessary exposure to UVR in order to reduce future potential cancer risks. The passage of HB 159 will accomplish the goal of promoting the health and safety of children and reducing their future cost of health care. Thank you for your consideration.