

Dear Senator Booker:

As someone in your district who lost a spouse to melanoma-the deadliest form of skin cancer, I urge you to vote "yes" to keeping the tax on tanning beds as changes to the Affordable Care Act are considered. In addition to losing my wife to melanoma I am the Founder and CEO of a local non-profit foundation that raises awareness, provides education and promotes early detection of melanoma: www.psmrf.org.

Here are a few pertinent things you should know about skin cancer and melanoma:

- In 2016 the Surgeon General declared skin cancer a national epidemic
- 1 in 5 people will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime, with melanoma being the deadliest form
- 80-90% of melanomas are caused from UV damage caused by the sun or tanning beds
- A review of scientific research estimated that tanning beds accounted for as many as 400,000 cases of skin cancer in the United States each year, including 6,000 cases of melanoma. A 2012 study found a 15 percent increase in the risk of certain skin cancers with every four sessions in a tanning bed before age 35.
- Melanoma is the number one cause of cancer deaths in young women age 25-29
- It is estimated that 87,000 new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed in 2017 and the rates of melanoma have been rising exponentially over the past 30 years.

The Affordable Care Act placed a 10 percent excise tax on indoor tanning services. Whether the tax has deterred people from using tanning beds remains a tough question to answer but it is clear that fewer teenagers have been using indoor tanning facilities in recent years. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of indoor tanning among high school students decreased to 7.3 percent in 2015, from 15.6 percent in 2009, a year before the A.C.A. and its taxes took effect.

Repealing the tax on tanning beds is a step in the wrong direction. Thank you for considering how this change could have a potentially harmful impact on our community at large.

Sincerely,
Neil Spiegler