

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

December 18, 2014

Robert Barchi
President
Office of the President
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
83 Somerset Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1281

Dear President Barchi:

We are writing to urge you to consider ending Rutgers University's practices that could endanger your students' health by allowing them to use university debit cards to pay for indoor tanning.

A recent analysis of 100 of the nation's largest universities identified 18 universities, including Rutgers, that allow students to use their university debit card to pay for sessions at local tanning salons. The study, published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, found that "these agreements constitute an endorsement and even encourage indoor tanning, which has been designated as a carcinogen by the World Health Organization."¹

We are concerned that allowing your students to use university debit cards to pay for tanning sessions endangers their health. There is considerable evidence that tanning beds present a significant cancer risk for users. A study in the *British Medical Journal* linked over 170,000 cases of skin cancer in the United States each year to indoor tanning.² A study in the *International Journal of Cancer* found that melanoma risks are six times higher for those who report undergoing ten or more tanning sessions by age 30.³ Another study concluded that

¹ Lindsay Boyers, et al., *Buying Indoor Tanning with University Debit Cards*, Letter, *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* (July 2014).

² *Indoor Tanning and Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*, *BMJ* (Oct. 2, 2012) (online at <http://www.bmj.com/content/345/bmj.e5909>).

³ Anne E. Cust, et al., *Sunbed Use During Adolescence and Early Adulthood is Associated With Increased Risk of Early Onset Melanoma*, *International Journal of Cancer* (May 2011).

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because young women are most likely to use these tanning salons, they face the highest risks, with the incidence of melanoma among young women increasing eight-fold between 1970 and 2009.⁴ Earlier this year, the Food and Drug Administration issued a final order reclassifying sunlamp products from class I to class II devices, reflecting increasing concerns about the risks from tanning.⁵

The risks for young users of tanning salons is exacerbated by the fact that these salons frequently provide false and misleading information to teens and young adults. A February 2012 congressional investigation that some of us conducted found that these salons deny the known risks of tanning, falsely claim that tanning has health benefits, fail to follow FDA recommendations on tanning, and specifically target teens with advertising and promotions.⁶

The authors of the new study on university debit cards concluded that “[t]he urgency and importance of ending relationships between universities and tanning salons is critical for the health of young adults and the reduction of skin cancer.”⁷

We believe your university should not be offering incentives to students to engage in activities that put their health at risk. We hope you will undertake a thorough review of the medical evidence and consider immediately ending agreements that allow students to pay for tanning salons with Rutgers University debit cards.

Thank you for your consideration.

⁴ Kurtis B. Reed, et al, Increasing Incidence of Melanoma Among Young Adults: An Epidemiological Study in Olmsted County, Minnesota, Mayo Clinic Proceedings (Apr. 2012).

⁵ FDA, General and Plastic Surgery Devices: Reclassification of Ultraviolet Lamps for Tanning, Final Rule (June 2, 2014) (online at <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/06/02/2014-12546/general-and-plastic-surgery-devices-reclassification-of-ultraviolet-lamps-for-tanning-henceforth-to>).

⁶ U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Minority Staff Report, False and Misleading Information Provided to Teens by the Indoor Tanning Industry (Feb. 2012).

⁷ Lindsay Boyers, et al., Buying Indoor Tanning with University Debit Cards, Letter, Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology (July 2014).

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone Jr.



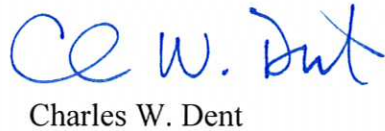
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