



COMMONWEALTH OF  
MASSACHUSETTS

## MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### *3rd Annual Skin Cancer Screening Day at the State House* **Senators Resor & Timilty Host Skin Cancer Screening**

BOSTON (April 11, 2007) – Dermatologists conducted free skin cancer screenings at the State House where over eighty legislators and staff attended the screening. The free event was hosted by State Senator Pam Resor (D-Acton) and Senator James E. Timilty (D-Walpole) in conjunction with the Melanoma Foundation of New England and Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology.

“I am honored to have been able to co-host such an important event for the past three years at the State House,” said Senator Resor. “We have received great feedback on this event from legislators and staff who took advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the dangers associated with melanoma. In fact, 7 people with possible skin cancers were referred for follow up. Educating people about skin cancer prevention and promoting early detection will translate into saved lives.”

“The key to the successful treatment of skin cancer is early detection, which is why our screening day has been such a success for the last three years,” said Senator Timilty, adding “Last year, six cases of melanoma were detected at this event. With melanoma, early detection is easy because the signs are visible on the surface of the skin. I will continue to promote skin cancer education and prevention programs such as this to combat the alarming increase in skin cancers in Massachusetts and across the nation.”

Melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, can affect anyone at any age. While the average age of melanoma detection is 52 years old, melanoma remains the most common cancer for people between the ages of 25-29. Short-intense periods of exposure to ultraviolet radiation including outdoor sunbathing and indoor tanning beds, is a primary cause of skin cancer.

In an effort to stem unnecessary exposure to harmful UVA and UVB, Sen. Timilty has filed legislation that would prohibit teens under the age of 16 from using indoor tanning facilities and require parental or

guardian permission for minors 16 and over. This legislation would also prohibit minors from operating tanning equipment.

Many health organizations have issued warnings about the dangers of indoor tanning. The World Health Organization (WHO) has even issued a call to prohibit teens from indoor tanning because of the serious dangers.

"Skin cancer is an epidemic in our country today," said Dr. Kathryn Bowers, President of the Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology. "More than one million Americans will probably get skin cancer this year. However, if detected and treated early, this disease can often be cured. If we learn the early warning signs of skin cancer and conduct self examinations, we can put a stop to this ever-growing epidemic."

Deb Girard, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Melanoma Foundation said, "Less than one-third of Americans currently examine their skin for signs of melanoma. When treated in its earliest stages, melanoma can be cured. If not treated early, the disease can quickly spread to other parts of the body and can be fatal."

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The Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology is the professional society for more than 300 practicing dermatologists in the Commonwealth. It is committed to advancing the diagnosis and medical, surgical, and cosmetic treatment of the skin, hair, and nails; advocating high standards in clinical practice, education, and research in dermatology; and supporting and enhancing patient care for a lifetime of healthier skin.

The Massachusetts Melanoma Foundation was founded in 1999 to combat the rising rate of melanoma and melanoma deaths in Massachusetts. The mission of the foundation is to save lives by reducing the incidence of melanoma through public awareness campaigns targeting sun protection, assisting those struggling with melanoma by developing support programs across the state and supporting educational research that will bring about sun related behavior change.



Pictured (l-r) are: l-r, Dr. Karen Rothman, Skin Screening Chair, Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology, Deb Girard, Executive Director, Melanoma Foundation of New England, State Senator James Timilty and Dr. Kathryn Bowers, President, Massachusetts Academy of Dermatology