

Sunscreen Standards Act Debated in Congress

On June 4, 2025, the US House skin cancer caucus introduced the SAFE Sunscreen Standards Act (Supporting Accessible Flexible and Effective Sunscreens Act) HR 3686. The bill aims to modernize the regulatory process for over-the-counter OTC sunscreen ingredients. If passed, it expedites the approval of new and effective sunscreen products for superior sun protection and skin cancer prevention. The bill also urges the FDA to establish flexible standards, other than the reliance on animal testing, for the evaluation of sunscreen filters.

The Senate committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) voted unanimously on July 30, 2025, to adopt the bill S 2292. This bill addressed the OTC Monograph Drug User Fee Act (OMUFA) and introduced new language supporting nonclinical testing alternatives to ensure that the monograph system adheres to recognized safety standards.

It's all great news especially for those calling for the finalization of sunscreen regulations and the introduction of new safer and effective UV filters with new



The future of sunscreen starts on Capitol Hill.

sunscreen protection protocols. This is a welcome development since skin cancer is the most common cancer in the US primarily due to sun exposure. US skin cancer incidents account for almost a third of the global skin cancer diagnoses, with five million Americans treated for skin cancer each year at a cost of over \$8 billion. Nearly 10,000 people are diagnosed with skin cancer every single day with two people dying of this disease every hour in the US.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) four out of five skin cancer cases (80%) can be prevented by adopting sun safe practices that include the use of sunscreens.

TOXIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Legislation to improve sunscreen products comes at a time where social media and influencers are spreading toxic claims about sunscreens. The uproar started in 2019 when FDA published a study in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). It revealed that common UV absorbing molecules were absorbed into the bloodstream in

24 participants with concentrations exceeding the FDA's established threshold.

This, in turn, heightened media concerns about the safety of sunscreen products. The British reality TV star Sam Faiers recently claimed that none of her family wore sunscreen and that sunscreens are full of toxic ingredients. The FDA, however, urged the public to continue using sunscreen products for protection stating that "these results do not indicate that individuals should refrain from the use of sunscreens."

SUNSCREENS ARE SAFE

Experts and organizations have been warning the public that sunscreens are safe and effective and are a primary mode of sun exposure protection. We have been advocating the use of applying adequate amounts of sunscreens on every exposed part of the body as all studies have revealed that individuals apply less than 1/10th of sunscreen that is required for optimal protection. According to Dr. Anthony Young, emeritus professor of photobiology at Kings College London, "There is zero evidence that sunscreens cause skin cancer." He adds that "skin cancers are caused by mutations, and almost all skin cancers have a mutation that is highly UV specific."

So, the House and Senate bills are first steps in having the FDA finalize its sunscreen monograph for the introduction of new, effective and safer UV filters. If passed, it allows the restoration of the consumer's confidence in using sunscreens as a primary mode of sun exposure protection. It will reduce skin cancer incidences worldwide. When it finally happens, after nearly 50 years of sunscreen regulation uncertainty, we will all be able to say "Amen!" ■

Nadim Shaath

Alpha Research & Development Ltd

Nadim@alpharnd.com



Dr. Nadim Shaath is the president of Alpha Research & Development, Ltd. in White Plains, NY. He has over 30 years of experience in the sunscreen industry. He served as the Chairman of the chemistry department at SUNY-Purchase and the CEO of Kato Worldwide. Recently he published his new book entitled "Healing Civilizations: The Search for Therapeutic Essential Oils and Nutrients" Cameron Books, Petaluma, CA.