The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 889, “An Act To Reduce Youth Cancer Risk.”

Today, there are significant limitations on the ability of a minor to utilize a tanning facility. Children less than 14 are prohibited from using a tanning device in a tanning facility, children 14 or 15 must be accompanied by a parent and an individual who is 16 or 17 must have express parental permission to utilize a tanning device. Taking this law even further, to completely prohibit the use of tanning devices in a tanning facility for all minors, is unnecessary and an overreach of government.

For generations, the Maine economy has been dependent on men and women working long hours in the sun. The proverb “Make hay while the sun shines” may not have originated in Maine, but it should have. Industries like potato and blueberry harvesting, lobster fishing, forestry, various construction activities and even our tourism industry all require and depend on significant time in the sunshine. While every person has a responsibility to take appropriate precautions both for themselves and their children, the dangers of the sun and UV radiation are never completely avoidable.

Despite what the Legislature appears to think, government is not the answer to all problems and it cannot protect its citizens from all potential dangers or poor decision making. I believe the success of our State is dependent on the success of our people—not on the prohibitions and restrictions government imposes. Government needs to get out of the way and allow parents to parent, allow individuals to make decisions for themselves and allow businesses to operate without the paralyzing intrusion of bureaucracy. This law is just one more example of the desire of the Legislature to inappropriately reach into the lives of families and control their decision making.

For this reason, I return LD 889 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor