

Senate Education Committee

Trevor Currier 271-4151

SB 432-FN, authorizing the application of sunscreen in schools and camps without a doctor's note or prescription and establishing a skin cancer prevention education program.

Hearing Date: January 20, 2026

Time Opened: 9:38 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:47 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Ward, Sullivan, Abbas, Prentiss and Altschiller

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill permits the self-application of sunscreen by children in schools and camps without the requirement of a prescription or a doctor's note. The bill authorizes specific school and camp personnel to apply sunscreen to a child with permission of the child's parent or guardian. The bill also establishes a skin cancer prevention education program in public schools.

Sponsors:

Sen. Ward
Sen. Rosenwald
Sen. McGough
Sen. Pearl
Sen. Carson
Rep. Kuttub
Rep. Long

Sen. Innis
Sen. Murphy
Sen. Fenton
Sen. Sullivan
Sen. Abbas
Rep. Mandelbaum

Sen. Watters
Sen. Birdsell
Sen. Avar
Sen. Gannon
Sen. Altschiller
Rep. Miles

Who supports the bill: Senator Tim McGough, Senator Cindy Rosenwald, Senator Daniel Innis, Senator Howard Pearl, Senator Donovan Fenton, Tom Prasol (Consumer Healthcare Products Association), Dr. Hayden Doughty, Ashley Lamb, Melanie Kasparian, Timothy Finney, Katie McLaughlin, Pamela DiNapoli, Katherine Lajoie, Andria Dion, Meredith Thibodeau, Carlene Ferrier, Polly Campion, Marcy Doyle, Kristian West, Kim Danis, Cathy Stratton, Emily Follo

Who opposes the bill: No one

Who is neutral on the bill: Melissa Clement (DHHS, Youth Recreation Camp Program)

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Ruth Ward

- Senator Ward introduced and testified in support of SB 432.
- Sen. Ward clarified that the bill would allow students to possess and use topical sunscreen on school property or at school-sponsored events without needing a note from a licensed health care provider. Additionally, the bill permits outdoor use of sun-protective clothing such as hats and sunglasses. She also mentioned that the bill establishes skin cancer prevention programs.
- Sen Ward stated that currently, students who want to use sunscreen at school must provide a doctor's note, which has negatively impacted the use of sun protection measures.
- Sen. Ward clarified that the bill does not oblige school districts to offer sunscreen.
- Sen. Ward confirmed that twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have enacted similar legislation.
- Sen. Ward stated that this bill is widely supported by the medical community.
- Sen. Ward stated that only ten percent of students nationwide report regular use of sunscreen. She established that regular use of sunscreen with a SPF of fifteen or higher reduced the risk of developing melanoma by fifty percent. She also stated that an individual's risk of melanoma doubles if they have had more than five sunburns.

Dr. Hayden Doughty, Dermatologist DHMC

- Dr. Doughty testified in support of SB 432.
- He determined that repeated UV exposure is the primary cause of most skin cancers.
- He stated that a single blistering sunburn in childhood doubles the person's chance of developing melanoma later in life.
- He stated that this bill will not only save lives but also save money because skin cancer treatments can be expensive.
- Senator Sullivan asked how often sunscreen should be applied and reapplied. Dr. Doughty replied that it depends on the SPF of the sunscreen, but he generally recommends every sixty to ninety minutes.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented:

Melissa Clement, Chief of Childcare Licensing in DHHS

- Ms. Clement said there are rules allowing children to bring sunscreen to camp with parental permission, without needing a doctor's note or prescription.
- She said she believes the issue has already been adequately addressed in the current camp rules.

T.C.

Date Hearing Report completed: January 21, 2026