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October 14, 2021

The Honorable Hank Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
2240 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Johnson:

On behalf of the American Academy of Dermatology Association (Academy), which represents more than 16,500 dermatologists nationwide, I write to express the Academy's support for your resolution H.Res. 718, which calls for the designation of October 17, 2021, as "National Vitiligo Awareness Day."

The Academy is committed to excellence in medical and surgical treatment of skin disease; advocating high standards in clinical practice, education, and research; and supporting and enhancing patient care to reduce the burden of disease. One in four Americans has a skin disease. Dermatologists evaluate and treat more than 3,000 diseases, including vitiligo, skin cancer, psoriasis, immunologic disease, and many genetic disorders. Since dermatologists are at the forefront of the treatment of vitiligo, the Academy appreciates your commitment to recognizing patients with vitiligo.

Vitiligo is a skin disease caused by the destruction of the melanin cells. In this condition, due to a combination of issues, primarily autoimmunity, the normal skin starts losing pigment from various parts of the body, at variable speeds and extent depending on the individual. Vitiligo occurs worldwide, in every race and ethnicity, with an estimated 1-2% of Americans suffering from vitiligo. Men and women are affected equally, inclusive of children and may appear at any age.

The Academy thanks you for your introduction of H.Res. 718 calling for the designation of October 17 as "National Vitiligo Awareness Day." If you have any questions or if the Academy can be of assistance in any way, please contact Jennifer Mangone, the Academy's Manager of Congressional Policy at jmangone@aad.org or (202) 286-8012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth J. Tomecki".

Kenneth J. Tomecki, MD, FAAD
President, American Academy of Dermatology Association

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