



October 18, 2021

Saint Paul City Council
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council President Amy Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Council Members:

The Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA) is writing to support the City Council's proposed ordinance to regulate price discounting of commercial tobacco products in Saint Paul. The mission of MPHA is to create a healthier Minnesota through effective public health practice and engaged citizens. As an independent voice for those in our profession, we strongly encourage you to support this ordinance.

The tobacco industry uses marketing strategies like coupons and price promotions (e.g., buy one-get one) to lower the prices of tobacco products, making them much more appealing to youth and young adults. Studies have found that approximately 50 percent of Minnesota smokers have used tobacco coupons or promotions in the past year to save money on cigarettes, and one third of adult smokers use tobacco coupons or discounts every time they see one.

Price is the most effective tool in reducing smoking in adults and preventing youth from starting. Studies have shown that increasing the price of tobacco products decreases tobacco use, especially among youth and low-income smokers, and helps current users quit smoking.

Saint Paul is taking a step in the right direction to create a healthier community. Prohibiting the redemption of coupons for all tobacco and vaping products, and setting a minimum price to cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, will make tobacco products less accessible and appealing to young people and protect youth, Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ and other residents of color from tobacco's harms as they have been historically targeted by the tobacco industry.

We hope the City Council will consider and pass this bold public health policy.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Moe

Elizabeth Moe
President, Minnesota Public Health Association

*The Minnesota Public Health Association is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
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