



**Mississippi Market**  
Natural Foods Co-op

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

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing to express our opposition regarding an amendment proposed by Councilmember Dai Thao regarding Saint Paul's Code of Ordinances: Section. 157.11--Parking for larger vehicles, and urge the council to vote against it. We urge you to reconsider the cap on the number of trucks allowed at a residence to 2-3 rather than limit one truck per household.

Mississippi Market is a cooperatively owned, natural foods store that supports people in accessing and understanding local, equitable, and sustainably sourced foods. We operate three full service grocery stores in St. Paul, with our newest location in East Saint Paul. Fostering growth in the local food economy is one of our primary strategic priorities, and last year nearly half of our purchases were from local farmers, producers and Minnesota-owned businesses.

With Councilmember Thao's new amendment, farmers can only have one truck registered to their house. If they have a second truck, they cannot park it on a residential street or else they could get ticketed, fined, and have their truck impounded. Thao's amendment would harm the efforts of urban farmers, and primarily Hmong farmers. This new amendment limits their ability to produce and sell healthy, sustainable, locally-grown food.

There has been a recent increase in the number of farmers markets and an increase in demand from consumers. Farmers often work two farmers markets simultaneously to make the same amount of money due to these factors. A second truck is often needed to support the additional farmers markets attended. More than half of the farmers at the Saint Paul Farmers Market are Hmong, and this amendment impacts Hmong farmers substantially. By allowing only one truck to be registered at an address, CM Thao's amendment sends a message to Hmong farmers that they can only grow their farming business to a certain point.

The city gives bus drivers special exemptions to this parking rule and allows recreational vehicles to be parked on residential streets as long as they are specially licensed. This amendment is restricting to farmers but not to bus drivers or owners of recreational vehicles.

I urge you to provide equal treatment for urban farmers and vote against Councilmember Thao's amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gail Graham  
General Manager