

May 17, 2017

Joe Thornton, VP of Content & PR  
Aimclear  
235 6<sup>th</sup> Street East  
St. Paul, MN

Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Boulevard West  
310 City Hall  
St. Paul, MN

Cc: Jaunae Brooks

St. Paul City Councilors,

I wish to express my concerns about safety in the St. Paul skyway system in and around the building in which I work. Over the last several months, we have seen a marked increase in the number of issues associated with vagrancy in the skyway portions of the building at 235 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Lowertown.

The building owner, Jaunae Brooks, took immediate and much needed safety precautions to address what became a clear health and safety issue for tenants of this building and connecting facilities to our north and east by placing code-activated locks on the doors to the building's common areas. The steps she took resulted in an immediate and noticeable reduction issues related to vagrancy and unknown individuals sleeping – or appearing to sleep – in nooks and crannies within our workplace. Since being ordered to leave the doors unlocked, we see a resurgence of the same problems on a regular basis.

I manage an office that includes two young women, two young men and myself – and we frequently host staff from our Duluth office in our space. Individuals often have to arrive early or stay late, depending on client needs. Staff members walk alone and are frequently confronted with multiple individuals lounging, sleeping or passed out in the skyway.

This is no judgment on the individuals in question. They need help. However, refuge in our building is not the answer and my staff members have no means to assess whether someone is merely sleeping or if they may pose a real health/safety threat. We have also encountered significant trash left in hallways and evidence of people relieving themselves in our elevator or other common areas. Unpleasant? Yes. Unsafe? Yes. Unacceptable? Yes.

Jaunae Brooks took appropriate steps to provide better safety and general conditions in our workplace. Foot traffic in our part of the Skyway is almost all associated with employees in our building and tenants of buildings connected to the north and east of us. There is little or no real need for any other foot traffic in this part of the Skyway. I urge you to allow our building management to resume limiting access after 8 PM. I also urge the Council to seek more permanent solutions to safety issues in the Skyway overall.

Regards,  
Joe Thornton