



SAINT PAUL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

August 11, 2014

Mayor Chris Coleman
City of Saint Paul
390 City Hall
15 W. Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Reference: City Council Action Ordinance 14-34 – Single Cigar Packaging Regulation

Dear Mr. Mayor:

The proposed ordinance to restrict cigars sold individually, a legal product produced and sold in conformance with Minnesota and Federal Law, raises the concern of the Chamber.

We understand and agree that efforts to reduce smoking, particularly among young people, are both laudable and an important aspect of a comprehensive national, statewide, and local health strategy.

However, we are concerned that when cities begin regulating a legally sold product in a subjective manner, retailers and consumers are left with a mish-mash of regulations that only serve to confuse the market.

Products legally sold should not be otherwise subjectively and individually regulated at the local level. The proper venue for this debate is the Minnesota legislature, where public policy decisions that affect the entire state can be debated and reviewed, understanding that any outcome should ensure that retailers are treated equally, regardless of the political sub-division they are located in.

We believe that on issues of statewide impact, restrictive regulatory climates that affect only a single jurisdiction will ultimately fail to achieve their objectives. Consumers simply cross a city line, eliminating local sales tax revenue for one jurisdiction while rewarding the next.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matt Kramer', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Matt Kramer
President

Cc: Saint Paul City Council

