

**From:** [David Olson](#)  
**To:** [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** 1000 Ft. vs. 300 Ft Buffer  
**Date:** Monday, September 16, 2024 12:10:33 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cannabis.pdf](#)

---

Good morning,

My name is David Olson-Iverson. First, thank you to the city council for providing a platform for testimony regarding the proposed policy last week. I testified at last week's meeting. I wanted to make sure you could all have a copy of my testimony.

One other thing I didn't have time to mention is that my four-year-old goes to school right near a street that is included in this policy. In my Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention position, I know how much marketing to youth is a factor in a child's decision to use a substance or not. My child would be able to see cannabis signs from her St. Paul public school playground at 300 feet. I don't want her to see that during school. I want her to have fun and get educated at school. What will the playground banter be amongst kids while they're playing outside and looking at the cannabis advertisements at school? They are way less likely to see the cannabis signs and ads if they are 1000 feet away.

These are my and my family's concerns regarding the policy you are voting on this week. We love St. Paul and have chosen St. Paul to raise our kids because of the diversity and cultural opportunities the city provides that our former community didn't have. We wanted our kids to be around other kids who look like them and don't look like them (culturally and racially). We can all learn so much from each other when we work together. Again, this is why we love St. Paul.

I trust that the St. Paul City Council will consider my testimony when voting on Wednesday.

Thanks again!

David Olson-Iverson

[#see-the-good \(English\)](#)

[#nisidaawinamok-minodoodaadiwin \(Ojibwe/Anishinaabe\)](#)

[#看到好的一面 \(Chinese\)](#)

[#arag-wanaaga \(Somali\)](#)

[#ver-lo-bueno \(Spanish\)](#)

**Husband of One, Dada of Two**

**Basketball Coach**

[david,olson.do@gmail.com](mailto:david,olson.do@gmail.com)

Cell 218-244-2732

**"Let's put our minds together as one..." (Theresa Bear Fox)**

["New Day" by STEP UP, ft. Vinny G, Elwood, Taylor O'Shea, Q, & Thomas X](#)

["Sky World" by Bear Fox, Performed by Teio Swathe](#)

Good afternoon,

My name is David Olson-Iverson. I live in St. Paul with my wife Claire and two children, who are three and four years old. My family members are of Native American (Anishinabe) and Puerto Rican heritage. My professional role entails coordinating BIPOC grantees in prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs in the metro.

I am here because I am concerned about weak regulation of the forthcoming cannabis industry. I believe city leaders should do everything in their power to limit youth exposure to cannabis. This means adopting a 1000 foot buffer from schools, not a 300 foot buffer as is proposed.

Before living in St. Paul, I lived in rural northern Minnesota. We generally grew our own vegetables and hunted and fished for our food. We didn't have easy access to groceries without loading up our family of seven, including five little kids, to go to the grocery store 25 miles away. Living where I lived also meant that substances like alcohol were just as hard to get as groceries. The only access I had to alcohol was whatever my parents brought into the house. It was the same with cannabis.

Unfortunately for my family, my parents openly abused substances. Because of the access my parents gave to me and my siblings, substance use has become ingrained in my siblings' lives and has destroyed the foundation of our family.

My wife and I moved our family to get away from the culture of my family's substance use. Part of our escape was adopting our oldest daughter, who is my blood niece. We are trying to break the generational cycle the best we can.

We made a choice to cut exposure to substance use out of our lives. Unfortunately, we are now facing the possibility of being thrown right back into it. My four year old just started in St. Paul public schools. Her school is located near one of the main areas where cannabis stores will be allowed per the proposed ordinance. I am truly worried for her and for all students. As **ADULTS**, it's our responsibility to protect kids.

I was surrounded by cannabis and other substance use growing up. I didn't have a choice. Know that the decision in front of you today will have ramifications for years to come. I understand that you are focused on equity for business owners. I urge you to also consider health equity and substance use prevention in your decision making. Thank you.