

I live in ward five and work as a social worker in St. Paul at a nonprofit that serves persons with chemical dependency and are involved in the court system. I have never been motivated to write you or any council member in the past. While grabbing a diet soda at my local gas station I noticed a yellow flyer concerning an upcoming hearing on a proposal to ban the sale of cigars in packages of less than 5 cigars.

I am not a smoker and have never been one. This proposal does alarm me however. I do not agree with the proposal one bit. I see its potential negative economic impact on small business retailers whom are already struggling during these troublesome economic times. It also makes me wonder what will be the next target of the council? maybe it will be the diet soda I purchased this morning? I see it as a form of social engineering on the part of the city, under the guise protecting minors from smoking. We already have laws in place to prevent and punish those who may sell to minors. I do believe that adults have the right to buy these cigars in any quantity and the city has no business dictating to retailers or consumers the price or quantity.

I plan to inform people I know today of this proposal by the council. Maybe they will see my concern on this proposal as well. I will be curious to see what your position on this matter is.

Thank you for your time today. **Steven Hawes**

I received another couple of call this morning from people voicing opposition to Ord 14-34.

Joe Maddie
