



November 16, 2015

Minnesota Chapter

**Minnesota chapter of the
American Academy of
Pediatrics**

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Councilmember Dai Thao
Councilmember Dave Thune
Councilmember Chris Tolbert
Councilmember Russ Stark
Councilmember Amy Brendmoen
Councilmember Dan Bostrom
Councilmember Bill Finney

Dear Saint Paul Councilmembers:

On behalf of the pediatricians in the State of Minnesota, the Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MNAAP), headquartered in Saint Paul, is strongly supporting the ordinance currently under consideration by the City Council that would limit the sale of flavored tobacco products and raise the price of cheap cigars that appeal to youth. We urge your support of this proposed ordinance.

Restricting the sale of flavored tobacco to adult-only stores like tobacco product shops, can limit youth access to these products. Use of flavored tobacco products, which look kid-friendly, can lead to a lifetime of addiction and increased health care costs. Almost 90 percent of smokers become addicted to tobacco before the age of 18. That means over 51,000 Saint Paul youth would be at risk for tobacco addiction if low cost or easily accessible tobacco products remain in our neighborhood stores.

Additionally, cheap cigars, flavored or unflavored, are appealing to youth. Increasing the price of these products will make them less attractive and affordable to kids. The City of Minneapolis recently set a minimum price for cheap cigars at \$2.60 each. Establishing the same minimum price in Saint Paul will create a more uniform policy across the metro area and ease enforcement.

Please support this effort to reduce the harm of tobacco and help keep flavored and cheap tobacco away from our youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susan Berry".

Susan Berry, MD, FAAP
President
Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics