

Dear Mayor Coleman, Council President Stark, and members of the Saint Paul City Council:

I am a Staff Pediatrician at the Children's Hospital in St. Paul. I have practiced medicine here for almost 20 years. The families that come to my clinic are diverse, in every way that you can imagine. What these parents have in common is that they all love their children dearly. They expect me to help them keep their children healthy. Smoking is a significant health hazard that we address at almost every clinic visit.

There is nothing good about smoking; everyone knows that. It causes lung cancer and emphysema, and leads to heart attacks and strokes. It is a leading cause of disability and death. In my clinic I see children with severe asthma exacerbations because someone around them smokes. I see families devastated by the loss of a parent or grandparent due to smoking. Sadly, I see teenagers starting to smoke, even though some have asthma themselves. They have no idea what they are getting into.

It's hard to start smoking – inhaling smoke is harsh and unnatural. Menthol flavoring hides this harshness, making it easier for adolescents to get started. Because it is less irritating it gives the false impression that it is healthier. It isn't. Adolescent cognitive reasoning is not fully developed; they frequently rely on emotion more than logic. This makes them more susceptible to starting. There is some data that menthol cigarettes may be *more* addictive, making them even harder to stop.

Black smokers matter. Tobacco companies target their advertising at the African American community. Approximately three quarters of African American smokers prefer menthol cigarettes. Since 80% of smokers start before 18 years of age, menthol cigarettes put African American adolescents particularly at risk.

The Food and Drug Administration and the American Academy of Pediatrics agree with me. St. Paul needs to block access to all flavored tobacco products, including menthol. Parents in St. Paul look to us, you and I, to do what is necessary to protect the health of their children. That's our job.

Sincerely,

Bill Zimny MD

Dear Mayor Coleman and members of the St. Paul City Council:

**Intro:** As a medicine-pediatrics resident physician who serves patients of all ages, I am constantly faced with the repercussions of tobacco use on a person's health. People dying of lung cancer or debilitated from heart disease consistently echo that they wish they had never started smoking when they were young.

**The problem:**

- Menthol tobacco products are targeted to youth
- Menthol cools the throat, making it easier for kids to start smoking. It is also more addictive and harder to quit.
- Since tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Minnesota, preventing young people from starting is very important.
- Targeted marketing contributes to health disparities

**Goal:** To stop the tobacco industry from addicting our young people and harming our community

**Solution:** Pass an ordinance in St. Paul to get menthol tobacco products out of stores where kids have access (gas stations, convenience stores) and in to adult-only tobacco shops where kids can't enter.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Croke

Dear Mayor Coleman and members of the St. Paul City Council:

My name is Dr. Emily Halverson, and I am a resident at the University of Minnesota Internal Medicine/Pediatrics program. I am writing regarding the Menthol Tobacco Ordinance.

As a doctor who cares for children, I meet kids who are making big decisions about whether they will experiment with controlled substances such as tobacco. As a doctor who cares for adults, I see the results of a lifetime of tobacco use in patients who are slowly dying of lung disease. Menthol products are particularly troubling to me for a number of reasons:

- Menthol tobacco products are targeted to youth
- Menthol cools the throat, making it easier for kids to start smoking. It is also more addictive and harder to quit.
- Since tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Minnesota, preventing young people from starting is very important.
- Targeted marketing contributes to health disparities

Please pass an ordinance in St. Paul to limit the sale of menthol tobacco to adult-only tobacco shops where kids can't enter.

I am just starting my career as a resident. This ordinance is a chance to save lives that would otherwise be cut short by lung disease. If it is passed, I will see fewer Minnesotans dying from tobacco use later in my career.

Thank you for working to protect our community.

Warm Regards,  
Dr. Emily Halverson, MD

Dear Mayor Coleman and members of the St. Paul City Council:

My name is Sharmila Raghunandan and I am a resident at the University of Minnesota Pediatric Residency Program and live in your ward. I am very passionate about children's health and public health policy measures to eliminate health disparities including tobacco prevention. I have taken care of several children with severe respiratory illnesses that have been exacerbated due to exposure to secondary smoke. Smoking is also a leading cause of cancer not just of the lung, but also of the esophagus, larynx, mouth, throat, kidney, bladder, liver, pancreas, stomach, cervix, colon, rectum and blood. It has severe negative consequences and I would like to do everything possible to prevent children from getting exposed to second hand smoke and from taking up smoking during adolescence.

We are thankful that Saint Paul has already prohibited the sale of candy and fruit flavored tobacco products in stores where kids can enter. Now is the time to treat menthol tobacco products the same way that we treat other flavors. Menthol is uniquely attractive to youth, as the taste masks the harsh flavor of tobacco. As a result, menthol tobacco is easier to start. Sadly, it also makes it harder to quit. For that reason alone, St. Paul needs to restrict access to all flavored tobacco products, and that includes menthol.

As pediatricians, we are passionate about working to help improve the health of children. As my city council representative, you can do much more to protect children's health than I can as a physician by passing an ordinance to get these deadly products out of stores where kids can enter. This ordinance is a clear step forward to protect future generations from tobacco harms.

Thank you for all the work you do to make our community a safer place to live in.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Sharmila Raghunandan

Dear Mayor Coleman and members of the St. Paul City Council,

I am a pediatric chief resident at the University of Minnesota and live with my family (including two small children) in St. Paul. We have loved living in St. Paul and consider it home. In my role as a pediatric resident I have witnessed the negative effects of tobacco abuse in young children. We all too often see children with mental health needs in our hospitals and in learning more about their substance abuse history often find that they were exposed to tobacco at a very early age. We know that tobacco is prevalent in homes of our young children, and worsens illnesses such as asthma, which can be life-threatening for some of our youngest and most vulnerable. Tobacco is highly addictive and leads to further exploration with other substances, having a crippling effect on the lives of the future generation. These children are our future, and I feel a tremendous sense of responsibility in ensuring that we do our absolute best to keep them healthy and safe.

**The problem:**

- Menthol tobacco products are targeted to youth
- Menthol cools the throat, making it easier for kids to start smoking. It is also more addictive and harder to quit.
- Since tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Minnesota, preventing young people from starting is very important.
- Targeted marketing contributes to health disparities

**Goal:** To stop the tobacco industry from addicting our young people and harming our community

**Solution:** Pass an ordinance in St. Paul to get menthol tobacco products out of stores where kids have access (gas stations, convenience stores) and in to adult-only tobacco shops where kids can't enter.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Rachel Cafferty

--

Rachel Cafferty, MD  
Pediatric Chief Resident  
University of Minnesota

**From:** [advocacy@mylegislators.com](mailto:advocacy@mylegislators.com) [<mailto:advocacy@mylegislators.com>] **On Behalf Of** Wendy Dotterweich

**Sent:** Sunday, September 17, 2017 9:49 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward5 <[Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter to St. Paul City Council Members

Dear Cnclm Brendmoen, Banning the sale of all flavored menthol cigarettes in addition to mint and wintergreen dip is clearly an attempt by City Council to further limit the choices of adult tobacco consumers, and it's UNFAIR! These restrictions on legal tobacco products go too far. Attempting to ban flavored tobacco is a prime example of government overreach. St. Paul has already banned all flavored tobacco in the city except for menthol, mint, and wintergreen. Banning these products even further unfairly limits my choices as an adult tobacco consumer. It's not about flavors. It's about limiting adult choices. Banning flavors will only undermine local small businesses and threaten our city's economy. Please STOP targeting adult tobacco consumers with unreasonable regulations. This is an important issue to me and I will remember how you vote. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Wendy Dotterweich 525 Tedesco St Saint Paul, MN 55130-4522

**From:** Sierra Wilson-Beckman [<mailto:beckm139@umn.edu>]

**Sent:** Saturday, September 16, 2017 1:07 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward5 <[Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** SUPPORT the Menthol Ban

Council Member Amy Brendmoen,

I am writing to encourage you to SUPPORT the ban on menthol, mint, and wintergreen tobacco sales in St. Paul. As a resident of this city, I believe this is an important ban for the health of our residents, especially our youth and those who are members of communities of color. Please put the health of our children and residents above the interests of tobacco companies.

Thank you.

Sierra Beckman



1400 EYE STREET, N.W. • SUITE 1200 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
PHONE (202) 296-5469 • FAX (202) 296-5427

---

Sept. 18, 2017

Saint Paul City Council  
15 W. Kellogg Blvd. #310  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mayor Coleman and Saint Paul Council Members:

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids would like to express our strong support for the menthol tobacco ordinance that would restrict the sale of menthol tobacco products to adult-only tobacco stores in Saint Paul.

Prohibiting the sale of menthol tobacco products is an important step in protecting Saint Paul children from the unrelenting efforts of the tobacco industry to hook them to a deadly addiction. For decades, tobacco companies have used flavorings, particularly menthol, to improve the taste and reduce the harshness of their products to make them more appealing to new users, almost all of whom are under age 18. The evidence is clear that menthol cigarettes have a direct appeal to youth and make it easier for them to start smoking. Prohibiting the sale of menthol cigarettes will help reduce tobacco use and its devastating toll.

**Tobacco companies have a long history of targeting and marketing flavored tobacco products to specific populations and subgroups.** Tobacco industry marketing, often targeted at minority communities, has been instrumental in increasing the use of menthol products and in the disproportionate use of menthol products by minority groups and youth. As a result, 85 percent of African-American smokers smoke menthol cigarettes, compared to 29 percent of white smokers. Menthol cigarettes are particularly popular among youth: more than half of youth smokers use menthol cigarettes, including seven out of 10 African-American youth smokers.<sup>i</sup> The FDA's Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee (TPSAC) estimated that by 2020, 4,700 excess deaths in the African-American community will be attributable to menthol in cigarettes, and more than 460,000 African Americans will have started smoking because of menthol in cigarettes. TPSAC further concluded that "Removal of menthol cigarettes from the marketplace would benefit public health in the United States."<sup>ii</sup>

There is also a long history of the tobacco industry targeting the LGBTQ population. For more than 20 years, the tobacco industry has targeted the LGBTQ market through direct advertisements, sponsorships and promotional events.<sup>iii</sup> The most infamous example of this targeted marketing of the LGBTQ community is "Project SCUM" (subculture urban marketing), a 1995 marketing plan developed by R.J. Reynolds to target the gay community in the Castro District of San Francisco.<sup>iv</sup>

The scientific evidence leaves no doubt that flavored tobacco products – especially menthol – have a profound adverse impact on public health in the United States, resulting in more smoking and subsequently more death and disease from tobacco use. The research also demonstrates that the tobacco industry is responsible for the harm caused by menthol cigarettes because of its targeted marketing to youth and African-American communities and its manipulation of menthol cigarettes to appeal to specific target markets. Restricting the sale of menthol tobacco products will help counter these industry tactics.

By supporting this ordinance, you are putting the health of Saint Paul’s youth before tobacco industry profits. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, along with our advocates in Saint Paul, look forward to seeing the City continue to work towards protecting Saint Paul youth from the harmful effects of tobacco use.

Restricting the sales of menthol tobacco is a bold step taken by just a few so far, including Minneapolis, Oakland, CA, (pending), and San Francisco. Stay strong and be brave in protecting our youth. The solid policy work you’re doing will set a huge example for the rest of the nation.

Our many thanks for your leadership to protect Saint Paul’s youth.

Sincerely,

*Matthew L. Myers*

Matthew L. Myers  
President  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

---

<sup>i</sup> Villanti, A., et al., “Changes in the prevalence and correlates of menthol cigarette use in the USA, 2004–2014,” *Tobacco Control*, published online October 20, 2016.

<sup>ii</sup> Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee, Menthol Cigarettes and Public Health: Review of the Scientific Evidence and Recommendations, July 21, 2011  
<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/TobaccoProductsScientificAdvisoryCommittee/UCM269697.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Goebel, K, et al., “Lesbians and gays face tobacco targeting,” *Tobacco Control*, 3: 65-67, 1994.

<sup>iv</sup> RJ Reynolds. Project SCUM. Legacy Tobacco Documents Library. December 12, 1995. Access Date: October 19, 2002. Bates No. : 518021121/1129. <http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/mum76d00>.

---

From: robin johnson [<mailto:robinjaye@comcast.net>]

Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 11:00 PM

To: #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

Subject: Menthol Tobacco Ordinance

The Honorable Chris Tolbert  
Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Councilmember Tolbert:

My family and I have lived in St. Paul for 13 years, moving across the river from Minneapolis where we lived in our first home. We moved to St. Paul because of the outpouring of community support. Our St. Paul community is very important to our family, and we hope that our elected officials do all they can to keep our community safe. This includes creating laws that can help reduce the many harms caused by tobacco products.

We hope that you will support an ordinance to get menthol tobacco products out of convenience stores and into adult-only tobacco stores where kids can't enter. Menthol tobacco products may be even more dangerous than regular tobacco products for kids because they are easier to start using as the menthol taste and cooling effect masks the harshness of tobacco. I know this first hand as I too, purchased menthol tobacco products as a youth for these very reasons. I no longer use any tobacco products and am fortunate to say I did not make them a life long habit, not something every user can say. Passing this ordinance to regulate where menthol tobacco can be sold will be a great step to protect youth and future generations in our community.

Sincerely,  
Robin Johnson  
1850 Lincoln Av  
St. Paul, MN 55105

---

**From:** Thomas Briant [<mailto:info@natocentral.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, September 18, 2017 1:38 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1 <[Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2 <[Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward3 <[Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward4 <[Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward5 <[Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward6 <[Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; #CI-StPaul\_Ward7 <[Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** St. Paul Menthol, Mint and Wintergreen Ordinance

# Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers

**DATE:**

September 18, 2017

**TO:**

St. Paul City Council Members

**FROM:**

Thomas Briant

The five retail trade associations that comprise the Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers and their respective St. Paul retail store members believe that it is vitally important to thoroughly consider the many questions that are raised by the proposed ordinance that would restrict the sale of menthol cigarettes and mint and wintergreen tobacco products. This need to answer serious questions about the impact of the ordinance, and the insufficiency of information provided to you by advocacy groups lobbying in favor of the proposed ordinance, support the Coalition's request in the accompanying letter that the St. Paul City Council consider appointing a task force to research the issues and consider solutions based on verifiable data.

We appreciate your consideration of this request for the appointment of a task force.



---

# Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers

September 18, 2017

Council President Russ Stark

Council Member Dai Thao

Council Member Rebecca Noecker

Council Member Chris Tolbert

Council Member Amy Brendmoen

Council Member Dan Bostrom

Council Member Jane Prince

St. Paul City Hall

15 West Kellogg Boulevard

St. Paul, MN 55102

## **Re: Menthol Cigarette and Mint and Wintergreen Tobacco Ordinance**

The retail trade associations that comprise the Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers and our respective retail store members located in St. Paul believe that it is vitally important to thoughtfully and thoroughly consider many questions that are raised by the proposed ordinance to prohibit the sale of menthol cigarettes plus mint and wintergreen tobacco products, except in tobacco-only shops.

The information provided to the St. Paul City Council by advocacy groups that are lobbying in favor of imposing restrictions on menthol cigarettes and mint and wintergreen tobacco products is insufficient to support adoption of these restrictions. The information is not sufficient because these advocates have failed to consider the following issues:

1. The impact of the proposed sales restrictions on neighborhoods and communities in St. Paul. For example, these impacts would include such matters as restricted access to food and grocery staples, retail employee job security, and crime related to an illegal underground market in restricted tobacco products.
2. The health impact of restricting the sale of mint and wintergreen smokeless tobacco and snus products.
3. The overall health impact on St. Paul residents because the proposed ordinance does not ban the possession or use of menthol cigarettes nor mint and wintergreen tobacco products.
4. The actual economic and health impact of the flavored tobacco ban enacted by the City of St. Paul in April of 2016.
5. The projected economic impact on St. Paul retailers that would no longer be permitted to sell menthol cigarettes and mint and wintergreen tobacco products. The information provided to St. Paul City Council members by these advocates in a two-page document titled “The Potential Impact of a Menthol Restriction on Convenience Stores” is inaccurate and misleading regarding retail sales, retail profits, and market share of menthol, mint and wintergreen. There needs to be a reconciliation of the differences between the advocate’s information and a new scientific economic impact study of restricting menthol, mint and wintergreen

---

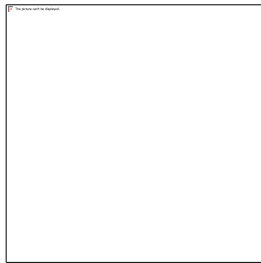
tobacco product sales in a major Twin cities municipality completed for the Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers by Management Science Associates.

6. The future impact on Minnesota's state budget regarding cigarette and tobacco excise tax revenue collections due to citywide menthol cigarette and mint and wintergreen tobacco product sales restrictions.

Given the importance of these issues and the need for accurate information on which to base such a significant policy decision, the Coalition of Neighborhood Retailers is requesting that the St. Paul City Council consider appointing a task force to research these issues and consider solutions based on verifiable and agreed upon information and data. This task force should include representatives of the city council, health related organizations, retailers, retail trade associations, consumers, and others including various experts whom could offer insight into the issue of menthol cigarettes and mint and wintergreen tobacco products.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and this request to appoint a task force to

study the issue of menthol cigarettes and mint and wintergreen tobacco products.



The Honorable Chris Tolbert  
Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Councilmember Tolbert:

I am a small business owners in your ward, employing health and wellness educators who work with youth sports teams around St. Paul and the metro area, and am the mother of two young children. I've seen firsthand from clients and family the destructive effects that tobacco has on individuals and society. The Power House and myself are very eager to see that our community does all that it can to reduce the harm caused by tobacco.

Saint Paul was one of the first cities in the country to pass an ordinance that regulates the sale of flavored tobacco products. Thank you for taking these products out of stores where kids can enter and selling them only in adult-only tobacco shops.

Now comes the next step, to treat menthol tobacco products the same way that St. Paul treats the cotton candy and grape flavored ones. Menthol tobacco products, including chew and e-cigs, are uniquely attractive to youth because menthol makes it easier for kids to start using because of its numbing and cooling effect. Menthol is the most common tobacco starter for kids. For that reason alone, St. Paul needs to restrict access to all flavored tobacco products, and that includes menthol. We hope the St. Paul City Council will soon follow Minneapolis and pass an ordinance to regulate where menthol tobacco products can be sold in order to protect our youth.

Thank you for your consideration and your investment in the health of our community.

Jill Stein Lipset  
The Power House at Highland, owner

---

617 Snelling Ave South, St. Paul, 55116  
651.699.4864  
[jill.lipset@powerhighland.com](mailto:jill.lipset@powerhighland.com) Mayor

Chris Coleman and the Saint Paul City Council

15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall

Saint Paul, MN 55102

9/18/17

Dear Mayor Coleman, Council President Stark, and members of the Saint Paul City Council:

I am writing today on behalf of Anglos Latinos Motivados a Superarse (ALMAS), a student group at Henry Sibley High School in Mendota Heights. ALMAS is dedicated to serving and promoting the health of the community. Many students in ALMAS live, work and play in St. Paul, and as such, we urge you to support the proposal that removes menthol tobacco from stores where kids can enter.

The tobacco industry targets diverse neighborhoods and those of lower socioeconomic status with advertising and they provide easy accessibility for youth to pick up these products. These industry tactics are paying off as too many young people are using, and becoming addicted to, these deadly products.

We hope that Saint Paul remains a leader in the state and assures that tobacco isn't the number one killer for another generation. Thank you for promoting the health of Saint Paul residents.

Sincerely,

Santiago Varela

[Title/Role

School: Henry Sibley High School

Mayor Chris Coleman and the Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
September, 18

Dear Mayor Coleman, Council President Stark, and members of the Saint Paul City Council:

I am writing today on behalf of Anglos Latinos Motivados a Superarse (ALMAS), a student group at Henry Sibley High School in Mendota Heights. ALMAS is dedicated to serving and promoting the health of the community. Many students in ALMAS live, work and play in St. Paul, and as such, we urge you to support the proposal that removes menthol tobacco from stores where kids can enter.

The tobacco industry targets diverse neighborhoods and those of lower socioeconomic status with advertising and they provide easy accessibility for youth to pick up these products. These industry tactics

---

are paying off as too many young people are using, and becoming addicted to, these deadly products. We hope that Saint Paul remains a leader in the state and assures that tobacco isn't the number one killer for another generation. Thank you for promoting the health of Saint Paul residents.

Sincerely,  
David Ibarra  
Minneapolis

Mayor Chris Coleman and the Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
[September 18, 2017]

Dear Mayor Coleman, Council President Stark, and members of the Saint Paul City Council:  
My name is Estreya Velazquez and I am writing today on behalf of Anglos Latinos Motivados a Superarse (ALMAS) at Henry Sibley High School in Mendota Heights. ALMAS is dedicated to serving and promoting the health of the community. Many students in ALMAS live, work and play in St. Paul, and as such, we urge you to support the proposal that removes menthol tobacco from stores where kids can enter. The tobacco industry targets youth and children from diverse neighborhoods and those of lower socioeconomic status with advertising and they provide easy accessibility for youth to pick up these products. These industry tactics are paying off as too many young people are using, and becoming addicted to, these deadly products. We hope that Saint Paul remains a leader in the state and assures that tobacco isn't the number one killer for another generation. Thank you for promoting the health of Saint Paul residents.

Sincerely,

Estreya Velazquez  
Student  
Henry Sibley High School