

James C. Platten  
CEO/Executive Director  
Open Cities Health Center



Thank you

Please vote to support the menthol ordinance. Doing so will protect the next generation from a lifetime of addiction and disease.

With the proposed ordinance, you have the power to stem the terrible pattern of addiction, disease and death we see in our clinic every day. Your vote to restrict the sale of menthol to adult-only tobacco shops will do more to prevent disease and reduce health disparities than all of our doctors can do in their lifetime.

Tobacco use greatly contributes to the health disparities we see in our community. Because menthol tobacco is harder to quit and is used by more than 80% of African American smokers, menthol contributes greatly to these disparities. Most of our patients who smoke want to quit, but it is very difficult and those who use menthol struggle even more.

Open Cities is a nonprofit community health center that has been serving thousands of people in Saint Paul since 1967. As a federally qualified health center our patients are often low-income, uninsured and underinsured patients, who bear a great burden of disease caused from tobacco use and nicotine addiction.

In addition, the board of Directors of Open Cities has also unanimously supported this work and it's intent.

Dear Mayor Coleman and Members of the Saint Paul City Council,  
On behalf of Open Cities Health Center, I fully support the menthol ordinance proposed in Saint Paul.

Mayor Coleman and Members of the Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

September 16, 2017

