

Saint Paul City Council
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

October 11, 2018

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CITY CLERK

Dear Mayor Carter and Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

The Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health Department supports the City of Saint Paul's ordinance amendment to limit individual youth access to off-sale liquor establishments that sell tobacco products. This measure will serve as a powerful deterrent of youth initiation, will reduce youth tobacco use, and will protect youth from a lifetime of addiction.

In 2015, the Minnesota Department of Health issued a health advisory detailing the harms of nicotine, noting that no amount of nicotine is safe for youth since there are negative implications for learning, memory, attention, and could lead to future addiction. Teens are especially susceptible to nicotine addiction and the harmful effects it has on the brain as they grow.

To reduce tobacco's negative impact and improve the health of our communities, it is critical that we prevent youth tobacco initiation. The National Academy of Medicine reports that there would be a 25 percent reduction in smoking initiation among 15 to 17-year-olds if the tobacco age was raised to 21.

This ordinance amendment would achieve a similar result as socially, a 21-year-old will not likely associate with a 15 to 17-year-old.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this significant public health issue and for making the City of Saint Paul a healthier place to live.

Sincerely,



Kathy Hedin, Interim Director