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Greetings Saint Paul City Council,

As a prevention specialist and resident of Ward 7, I write to support strong consequences for the repeated tobacco license violations of Twins Market and Meat, 1055 4th Street East.

I spend my days working with citizens deeply concerned about preventing alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse. One of our goals is to develop and implement strong public policies that make drug-free living the easy choice, not the hard choice. When businesses that are licensed by the city either ignore or cheat to get around the good public health policies, we work so hard to enact, it undermines our work. It also encourages other businesses to flout the law.

As we have seen with COVID-19 restrictions, some businesses think that following the closure orders is optional. As soon as one or two businesses loudly announced that they were going to open for business regardless of the law, a whole host of other businesses followed suit. All that came to a quick halt when Attorney General Ellison moved to enforce the law. This is a lesson we cannot afford to ignore.

The violations of the Twins Market and Meat are so egregious that they simply must be held accountable. Failure to do so sends a powerful message and it is not a message that I as a prevention specialist am okay with.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness on this important matter.

Best,
Kjirsten Anderson