



October 6, 2021

Dear Council President Amy Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Council Members:

I am writing on behalf of the American Lung Association, the oldest voluntary health organization in the country. Our mission is to improve lung health and prevent lung disease. The American Lung Association strongly supports your efforts to prohibit the redemption of tobacco and vaping coupons, set a minimum price to cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, and increase penalties for retailers who illegally sell tobacco products to minors.

The tobacco industry has a long history of targeting youth and minority populations with their products through coupons and promotions, especially in low income neighborhoods. A tobacco industry executive was once quoted, *"We don't smoke that s***t. We just sell it. We reserve that right for the young, the poor, the black, and the stupid."*

The United States Department of Health and Human Services has found that when prices are higher, tobacco use decreases, especially among youth and low-income people who smoke. It prevents youth from starting and helps people quit. Less coupons and price promotions also means that the communities disproportionately harmed by tobacco will have freedom from less tobacco industry targeting through advertisement in areas with higher numbers of individuals from these particular populations and other mailer promotions. This includes African Americans, youth, LGBTQ+, and low-income populations who, in response to industry targeting, use these products at higher rates, therefore, have more adverse health effects.

Thank you for prioritizing the health and the health equity of your residents with consideration of this policy. As leaders in lung health and tobacco prevention, you have the American Lung Association's full support in passing an ordinance to prohibit the redemption of tobacco and vaping coupons, setting a minimum price to cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, and increasing penalties for irresponsible retailers. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the American Lung Association if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Heimer".

Elizabeth Heimer
Specialist, Public Policy & Advocacy
American Lung Association

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About the American Lung Association

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Gold-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: [Lung.org](https://www.lung.org).

American Lung Association • 490 Concordia Ave • Saint Paul, MN 55103
1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) [Lung.org](https://www.lung.org)