

HealthPartners
8170 33rd Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55425
healthpartners.com



Mailing Address:
PO Box 1309
Minneapolis, MN 55440-1309

October 12, 2021

310 City Hall
15 Kellogg Boulevard West,
Saint Paul, MN 55012

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Councilmembers:

On behalf of the 26,000 employees at HealthPartners, and especially the nearly 7,000 of whom live or work in the great city of Saint Paul, we want to express our strong support for the proposed city ordinance that will regulate price discounting of tobacco products. It is HealthPartners' mission to improve health and well-being in partnership with our members, patients and the community.

Approximately 95% of smokers start before they are 21. For years, tobacco use has been the number one preventable cause of death in our country and our state, costs the state more than \$3 billion annually in excess health care costs and each year more than 6,000 Minnesotans die from tobacco-related diseases. We know that Big Tobacco uses innocuous tactics like price discounts and coupons to keep people using its harmful product, especially youth and BIPOC communities, and we applaud the Council's efforts to restrict this.

Cheap tobacco helps no one. Please take this next step to prevent another generation of our children becoming addicted to tobacco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Kottke MD".

Dr. Thomas Kottke, M.D.
HealthPartners Medical Director, Well-being