

October 19, 2021

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

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Council Members:

Allina Health is a not-for-profit network of hospitals, clinics and other health care services, providing care throughout Minnesota and western Wisconsin, and we are proud to serve the people of Saint Paul and surrounding communities. Preventing illness and improving the overall health of the communities we serve is vital to our mission. It is who we are. That's why, on behalf of our providers, caregivers, and patients, we want to offer our strong support for the City of Saint Paul's proposed ordinance that would regulate price discounting of tobacco products within city limits.

The harmful effects of tobacco and tobacco products are well documented. We are pleased to see communities around the state taking the initiative of implementing policies aimed at reducing the number of tobacco users or preventing potential new users. By adopting this proposed ordinance, Saint Paul is taking another step in protecting communities. Prohibiting the redemption of coupons for all tobacco and vaping products and setting a minimum price to cigarettes and smokeless tobacco will make tobacco products less accessible and appealing to people who have historically been targeted by the tobacco industry.

The best way to combat the negative economic and health impacts of tobacco use is to never start. At Allina Health, we see first-hand the negative impact that tobacco use has on the health of Minnesotans. What may be the most agonizing aspect of treating patients with tobacco-caused complications is knowing that so many are preventable.

We fully support the City of Saint Paul's proposed ordinance to regulate price discounting of tobacco products, and we commend you for your leadership on this bold but necessary initiative.

Sincerely,



Kristen McHenry
Director of Government Relations
Allina Health