

From: [Jeanne Weigum](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: copy of testimony from September 11 public hearing
Date: Friday, September 13, 2024 9:39:01 AM
Attachments: [cannabis testimony.pdf](#)

For inclusion in the record.

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Plant a tree you will never Climb
Jeanne Weigum

My name is Jeanne Weigum. I live at 1647 Laurel in Ward 4.

Many of us worked very hard to try to preserve local control of cannabis retail operations. We were slightly successful with at least a few areas being preserved for cities to establish rules to protect their communities. Throughout the process of legalizing recreational cannabis the voices of commerce have been loud and persuasive. The voices of the public health community have largely been ignored or drowned out. I am here to make an argument on behalf of public health.

I am disappointed that Saint Paul is not taking full advantage of those options that are left to the city for regulation. For example state law allows the city to set a distance requirement of up to 1000 feet from schools and 500 feet from day care facilities, residential treatment facilities, playgrounds and athletic fields used by minors. The current proposal allows these businesses to locate as close as 300 feet, about a block. Do we really want a recreational cannabis store located about a block from a chemical dependency treatment facility? An elementary school? A playground? I don't.

Saint Paul has a 500 foot distance requirement for adult entertainment venues and a 1000 foot requirement for gun shops, so these kinds of distance requirements are not unheard of in the city. I think we are pretty clear that we see guns and porn shops as something we don't want to normalize for our young people. I would hope we would see sales of a potentially life altering chemical in the same way.

I am also disappointed that the City has not taken advantage of the public health resources that are available to you. The Saint Paul and Ramsey County Department of Public Health has a full time professional dedicated to working on

public health/cannabis issues. The fact that city staff did not seek their assistance in developing this important ordinance shines a bright light on how little interest there is in the health impact of these changes.

Please consider that whatever regulation you set now will be very difficult to make stronger later because people will have made investments and there will be a strong constituency to maintain the status quo. It is relatively easy to loosen regulation. Please take that route. Regulate as strongly as the state allows, then as experience teaches us how it is working, make adjustments.