

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2020 -016

A RESOLUTION INDICATING SUPPORT FOR RAISING THE LEGAL AGE FOR TOBACCO SALES, USE AND POSSESSION FROM 18 TO 21 AND BANNING THE SALE OF FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota regrettably has not undertaken any action to raise the legal age for commercial tobacco sales from 18 to 21 which would help keep commercial tobacco out of high schools; and

WHEREAS, commercial tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable disease and premature death in Minnesota and is one of the largest drivers of health care costs; and

WHEREAS, 95% of current adult smokers began using commercial tobacco before age 21, and the ages of 18 to 21 are a critical period when many experimental smokers transition to regular, daily use; and

WHEREAS, smoking-caused health costs in Minnesota total more than \$3 billion per year and raising the age of legal sales of commercial tobacco products, including e-cigarettes to age 21 will decrease overall usage rates, which in turn will lead to reduced future tobacco-related health care costs; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine estimates there would be a 25% reduction in smoking initiation among 15-to-17 year olds if the legal sales age for tobacco were raised to 21 years of age, and local analysis estimates it would prevent 30,000 Minnesota youth from starting to smoke; and

WHEREAS, youth e-cigarette use is a public health threat. The Food and Drug Administration has called it an epidemic. Since 2014, e-cigarettes use has increased by 50 percent among Minnesota high school students and this increase has driven any commercial tobacco use among Minnesota high schools students to the highest rates in nearly two decades; and

WHEREAS, the youth e-cigarette use epidemic has resulted in youth who are addicted to nicotine and seek to satiate their addiction; and

WHEREAS, nicotine harms adolescent brain development and no amount of nicotine is safe for youth. Youth nicotine exposure has negative implications for learning, memory, and attention span; and

WHEREAS, fifty-eight counties and cities in Minnesota have raised the tobacco sales age from 18 to 21 including neighboring communities: Owatonna, St. Peter, Mankato, Waseca, Byron, Arden Hills, Eden Prairie, Bloomington, St. Paul and Minneapolis; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has taken temporary, limited, and insufficient action to address the harms caused by flavored tobacco products; and

WHEREAS, even after the federal government temporarily banned sales of a limited type and limited flavors of certain e-cigarette products, a variety of flavored tobacco products remain in retail outlets that are accessible to young people; and

WHEREAS, research shows that flavors are a primary reason that youth report trying commercial tobacco products and that those youth that use commercial tobacco products overwhelmingly prefer using flavored tobacco products, including mint and menthol; and

WHEREAS, flavors in commercial tobacco products make products initiation easier, facilitate addiction, make quitting harder, and pose unique health harms for the user; and

WHEREAS, several studies have found that banning the sale of menthol-flavored cigarettes would result in thousands of lives saved and one-third to one-half of those would be African-American lives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (Northfield ASAP) and the City of Northfield requests that the State of Minnesota take immediate action to increase the tobacco sales, use and possession age from 18 to 21 and ban the sale of all flavored tobacco products.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 4<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

VOTE:    \_\_\_ POWNELL    \_\_\_ DELONG    \_\_\_ GRABAU    \_\_\_ NAKASIAN  
          \_\_\_ NESS    \_\_\_ PETERSON WHITE    \_\_\_ ZWEIFEL