

St. Paul Coalition Asks City to Regulate Window Signs

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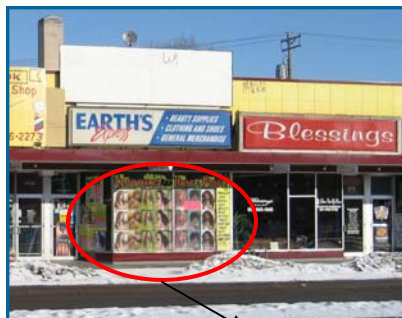
Please contact Betsy Brock with questions or comments: 651-646-3005 or bb@ansrmn.org

An active coalition of groups including the Ramsey Tobacco Coalition, Scenic St. Paul, and Scenic Minnesota are asking the City of St. Paul to regulate window signs that are inside of a store facing out. Specifically, this coalition is asking St. Paul to amend the City’s sign code to improve the quality of signs, reduce the negative impacts of excessive numbers of signs and regulate the movement and brightness of digital signs. This coalition is not working to regulate the content of the signs, that is, what the sign says. Doing so would violate the First Amendment.

Window signs are currently unregulated through much of the City. St. Paul is divided into 17 Special Sign Districts. Only four of these Special Sign Districts currently regulate window signs.

The proposed citywide ordinance would:

1. Limit temporary and permanent signs so that they do not exceed **25%** of any window area, including windows in a door.



Examples of the types of signs that would be limited by the proposed St. Paul ordinance.



2. Restrict flashing and scrolling signs.
3. Ensure that window signs placed between 4 and 7 feet from the interior floor level must be placed so that there is visibility both in and out of the store.

These changes are being proposed because large numbers of window signs:

1. Make it difficult to see both in and out of stores, which is a safety issue; and
2. Clutter and pollute neighborhoods, with low-income areas most adversely affected; and
3. Cause driver distraction.

And, of course, many of these signs also happen to advertise unhealthy products like: alcohol, tobacco, and junk food.

Ramsey Tobacco Coalition members, along with other members of the broader coalition are currently making the rounds to each of St. Paul’s 17 District Councils. RTC students are presenting to each of the Councils and asking for support of the city ordinance. So far, two District Councils have passed a resolution supporting the ordinance.

If you would like to get involved with the effort, please contact Jeanne Weigum at jw@ansrmn.org or 651-646-3005.

FDA Loses Appeal, Will Not Be Able to Regulate E-Cigarettes as Drug Delivery Devices

The U.S. Court of Appeals recently ruled that the FDA can only regulate e-cigarettes as tobacco products—not as drug delivery devices. The FDA was trying to regulate the products as drug delivery devices. If they were regulated in this way, the FDA would have been able to outright ban the sale and distribution of e-cigarettes. However, they will not be able to do this now that they must be regulated as tobacco products.

This decision was released the same day as results from a study from researchers at the University of California, Riverside which found that many e-cigarettes have design flaws, lack adequate labeling, and raise concerns about quality control and health. ♦

Sources: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-12-07/fda-loses-appeal-can-t-regulate-e-cigarettes-as-drug.html> (12/8/2010)

Trtchounian, A. & Talbot, P. Electronic nicotine delivery systems: Is there a need for regulation? *Tobacco Control*. Published online: December 7, 2010. doi: 10.1136/tc.2010.037259

St. Paul Youth Groups Advocate for Sign Regulation

Mount Airy Boys & Girls Club

On December 7th, youth from the Mount Airy Boys & Girls Club presented to the St. Paul District Five Council (Payne-Phalen) about the importance of regulating window signage. The Council voted 8-0 in favor of regulating signs in St. Paul.

Three youth from Mount Airy Boys & Girls Club were present: Sarabi Carter, Zanthony Howard, and Jabray Martin. Ms. Martin had this to say: "Excessive tobacco advertising in low income, African American communities, makes me feel insulted, used and targeted... I also feel guilty because I'm a part of this statistic and this is why I am here as an advocate with the Ramsey Tobacco Coalition."

Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation

On December 7th, members of the Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation youth group presented to the St. Paul District Eight Council (Summit-University). Five youth were present: Chante Neal, Akela Law, Brielle Godfrey, Danielle English and Isha Coleman. The Council voted 9-1-2 in favor of supporting sign regulation. ♦



Left: Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation youth group members celebrating after their sign regulation win. From left to right: Chante Neal, Akeyla Law, Brielle Godfrey, Danielle English, and Isha Coleman.

Right: Mount Airy Boys & Girls Club Youth presenting about sign regulation. From left to right: Sarabi Carter, Zanthony Howard, and Jabray Martin.



Tobacco-Free Funding Policy Movement Continues to Grow

The tobacco industry has a long history of offering funding and materials to nonprofits that typically serve, low income, people of color, women, the GLBT community, and youth. The Ramsey Tobacco Coalition (RTC) is proud to announce that 33 organizations serving Ramsey County have adopted policies stating they will not accept donations of any kind from the tobacco industry.

Many nonprofits and organizations are learning how tobacco donations are used to improve the industry's image in the community. Accepting tobacco money sends a false message to the community, leaving many of our youth with the idea that Philip Morris and R. J. Reynolds are positive businesses who make an acceptable product.

RTC urges all organizations to examine their funding policies and insure a tobacco-free funding policy is included. A written policy is one of the best ways to protect your organization's good name and the people you serve from the tobacco companies. Please do not hesitate to contact Bernadette Chlebeck of RTC and have your organization's name added to the tobacco-free funding policy list. Bernadette can be reached via phone (651-646-3005) or email (bc@ansrnmn.org). ♦



Left: After rejecting \$9,000 from the tobacco industry, Brian Gioielli of Riverview Economic Development Association (REDA) accepts certificates from Bernadette Chlebeck of RTC and Carmen Robles of Jóvenes de Salud.



Above: Mount Airy becomes the 3rd Boys & Girls Club in Ramsey County to adopt a tobacco-free funding policy. Andrew Jones of the Boys & Girls club accepts a certificate from Bernadette Chlebeck.

Below: Twin Cities Black Pride is the first Pride organization in the country to adopt a tobacco-free funding policy. Earnest Simpkins accepts award from Bernadette Chlebeck.

