



Itasca County Board of Commissioners
123 N.E. 4th St.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-2600

October 13, 2016

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of ClearWay Minnesota, a statewide nonprofit organization working to reduce tobacco's harm in our state. We strongly support the proposal to include e-cigarettes in the language of Itasca County's clean indoor air ordinance.

Common-sense limitations on e-cigarettes will keep our indoor air clean and prevent kids from being exposed to tobacco use. E-cigarette aerosol contains nicotine, heavy metals, formaldehyde and carcinogens. There have been no long-term studies conducted on e-cigarettes, so the ultimate impact on those exposed to their secondhand aerosol is unknown; however, a meta-analysis of research found they contribute to indoor air pollution and concluded they should be covered by smoke-free public policies. E-cigarette use in public places like restaurants also models recreational tobacco behaviors to children and young adults.

The state of Minnesota implemented some restrictions on e-cigarettes in 2014, but they did not go far enough to protect youth and clean indoor air. However, counties and cities have been rising to this challenge at the local level, and to date more than 50 communities have added e-cigarettes to the language of their clean indoor air ordinances. This means approximately 50 percent of Minnesotans are now protected from the chemicals in e-cigarette aerosol, but that number should be higher. Polling also found the vast majority of Minnesotans – 79 percent – support expanding protections to prohibit e-cigarette use in indoor public places.

The air in Minnesota's bars and restaurants has been clean for nearly 10 years. This proposal will keep Itasca County's standard for indoor air high, and will prevent a new normalization of smoking behavior in public. I urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Molly Moilanen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Molly Moilanen, M.P.P.
Director of Public Affairs
ClearWay MinnesotaSM