From:	Andrew Leikas
To:	Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject:	Please oppose the tobacco ordinance
Date:	Sunday, October 25, 2020 9:21:38 PM

Dear council members,

I ask that you oppose the tobacco ordinance because it will be ineffective at addressing underage tobacco use and will hurt local businesses, jobs and adult tobacco/vape users in Missoula.

From my understanding youth are getting access to vape products online. All they need to do is click a box saying they are of age. Youth are not able to purchase tobacco that way, but for some reason there aren't regulations in place to prevent them from purchasing vape products online. Figuring out how to stop online sales of vape products to youth would be more effective at combating underage vaping.

Another measure you could consider would be only allowing businesses that are 21+ to sell flavored products. That would limit exposure of these products to people that aren't old enough to buy them.

Recently the FDA has been taking major steps to address underage smoking and vaping. Less than a year ago they raised the minimum age to purchase products containing nicotine to 21. This will go a long way to getting tobacco and e-cigarettes out of the high schools now that high school seniors are no longer able to purchase these products.

Just over a month ago the FDA started requiring all vapor products to submit a premarket tobacco products application. The applications cost vape companies a minimum of $400,000 and some companies have had to spend over $1,000,000 in FDA application fees, in addition to lawyer fees for preparing the applications. This has caused at least half the vape products on the market to disappear. The FDA is not approving products that they believe appeal to youth, so companies that are going through the application process aren't going to risk their application fees on any products that will get denied.

The statistics and product examples that the proponents use are outdated and don't reflect the recent steps the FDA has taken to address underage nicotine use. This has been a huge undertaking by the FDA. The steps they have taken, along with their continued regulation of vapor products, will be effective at curbing youth smoking.

Thank you for taking the time to consider everyone's opinions on this ordinance!

Andy Leikas
President, Mellow Mood Pipe and Tobacco