



John O. Norquist  
Mayor  
Seth L. Foldy, MD  
Commissioner of Health  
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Health Operations Director



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June 11, 2002

Alderman Marvin Pratt  
President, Milwaukee Common Council

Members, Common Council

RE: file 901402

Dear Members of Common Council:

I strongly support the proposal to prohibit smoking in city buildings and vehicles. The scientific evidence is now overwhelming that second-hand tobacco smoke:

- Causes cancer in non-smokers exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke on a regular basis (EPA estimates over 3000 additional lung cancer deaths annually in non-smokers due to second-hand smoke, with 2200 of these resulting from out-of-home workplace or social exposures.)
- Exposes non-smokers to significant levels of other dangerous toxins such as carbon monoxide
- Triggers asthma and worsens other respiratory problems in exposed non-smokers
- Contributes to infections and other medical conditions in exposed non-smokers.

The U.S. Surgeon General, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Academy of Sciences have reached similar conclusions based on hundreds of clinical, animal, and epidemiologic studies.

I believe there is adequate evidence to predict that eliminating smoking in City buildings and vehicles will:

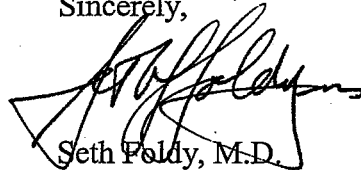
- Reduce workforce absenteeism from medical conditions
- Produce savings in medical plan expenditures
- Create a more pleasant and productive work environment
- Reduce fire risks in city buildings and vehicles
- Reduce traffic accidents involving city vehicles

- Increase employee smoker “quit” rates further reducing direct medical costs and premiums
- Reduce building operational and maintenance costs
- Set a healthy example for other employers and businesses.

Eliminating smoking in city-owned buildings and vehicles would also reward the efforts of some very special students in Milwaukee who have worked hard to help council members craft a well-worded ordinance based on the experience of other local municipalities. I am encouraged by their vision and energy, and extremely proud to be associated with them. Let us take up their challenge so that they can move on to bigger and better victories in our city’s battle with big tobacco.

I apologize to members of the Public Works Committee that this letter comes so late, but I only learned today that the Committee would hear the proposal at its June 12 meeting. I look forward to working with Council to make our municipal government environment smoke-free.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Seth Foldy", written over a faint, illegible stamp or background.

Seth Foldy, M.D.  
Commissioner of Health

cc: Mayor Norquist  
Strive Media Institute  
Milwaukee Community Tobacco Coalition c/o Cassandra Lanier