

December 15, 2024

North Reading Board of Health
c/o Robert Bracey
North Reading Health Agent
235 North Street
North Reading, MA 01864

Dear North Reading Board of Health:

This letter follows the attached October 1, 2024 letter to the Board of Health and the August 22, 2024 Board of Health meeting in which North Reading Drug-Free Communities Grant Director Amy Luckiewicz presented information on nicotine/tobacco-free generation (NFG/TFG) policies enacted by Boards of Health in several Massachusetts communities.

As you know, the goal of such a policy is to use a primary prevention model to avert nicotine addiction. This goal appears in line with the charge of both the North Reading Youth Substance Use Prevention Coalition and Board of Health, which lists tobacco control programs as under its purview on its North Reading website page.

As such, the Coalition respectfully requests that the North Reading Board of Health schedule a public hearing in advance of considering an NFG/TFG policy for North Reading.

Given that more than 80 percent of smokers start by age 18 and almost all by age 26, NFG policies are an important tool to prevent nicotine-related diseases from taking hold. The policy would not remove the ability to purchase nicotine from anyone who already has it. In a community survey through National Night Out and Elder Services that yielded 48 responses, 92% of respondents were in favor of such a policy, while 4% were opposed and 4% needed more information.

The Reading, Melrose, Malden, Stoneham, Wakefield, and Winchester Boards of Health have enacted NFG policies, and similar policies are under consideration in other communities. In announcing its new policy, Melrose stated: "This regional public health policy drive will help to ensure a level playing field for local businesses and amplify the impact of this addiction-prevention policy across municipal borders."

As you might be aware, State Senator Jason Lewis intends to propose statewide NFG legislation in January. However, such legislation will likely take as long as three years to enact. As such, we're asking the Board of Health to consider an NFG policy now because three years is too long as more young adults become addicted to harmful nicotine.

If you need additional information before setting a public hearing date, Amy Luckiewicz is happy to provide it. Otherwise, we look forward to providing more feedback during the public hearing process.

Thank you for your consideration,
North Reading Youth Substance Use Prevention Coalition (signatures follow)

Pete Majumdar, *Pamela Munn*, *Val*, *Marci Bailey*
Justin A Ford, *R. Jeff Mullen*, *Sammy*, *Patricia Day*

cc: Gary Hunt, Karen Martin, Pam Vath, North Reading Board of Health
Steve O'Leary, Board of Selectman Liaison

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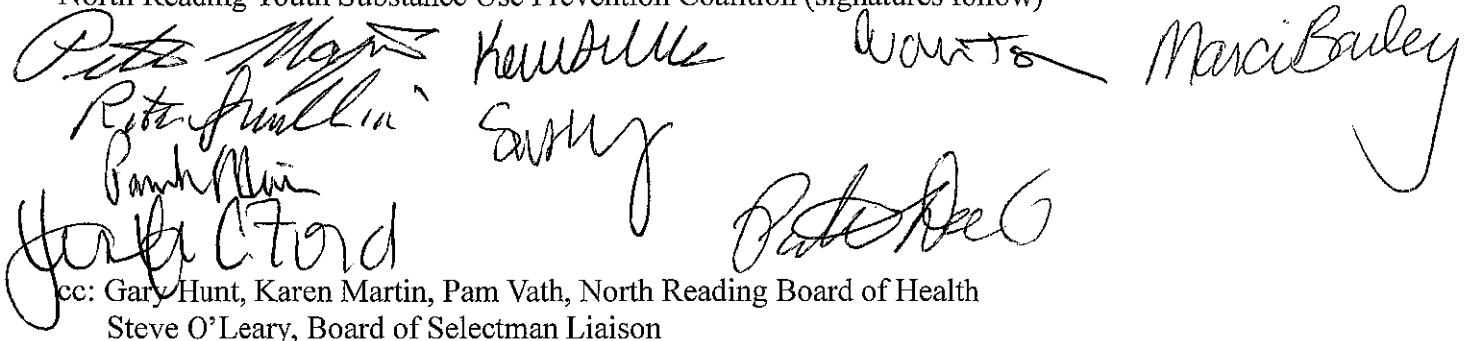
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The block contains several handwritten signatures in black ink. From left to right, the signatures appear to be: 'Pete Maguire', 'Karen Martin', 'Pam Vath', 'Steve O'Leary', 'Marc Bailey', and another signature that is partially obscured. The signatures are written in a cursive, informal style.

cc: Gary Hunt, Karen Martin, Pam Vath, North Reading Board of Health
Steve O'Leary, Board of Selectman Liaison