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January 14, 2025

Ms. Karin Carroll
Director, Health and Human Services
Somerville Board of Health
50 Evergreen Avenue
Somerville, MA 02145

Dear Ms. Carroll,

Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) writes in support of the Nicotine-Free Generation policy and encourages adoption in the City of Somerville. As a public safety net healthcare system, Cambridge Health Alliance is committed to ensuring Caring for All. As part of our commitment, CHA works to advance public health policies and initiatives that promote the health of priority populations, including youth. CHA applauds the ongoing regional efforts to ensure youth can avoid the negative health impacts of nicotine addiction through this critical policy change.

Data indicates that early tobacco usage is a strong predictor of habitual usage in adulthood. According to the American Cancer Society, almost 90% of adult cigarette smokers experimented with tobacco before the age of 18. Adopting a Nicotine-Free Generation Policy Ordinance in the City of Somerville represents a critical step towards safeguarding the health and well-being of future generations. By prioritizing youth health, reducing the burden of tobacco-related diseases, and promoting health equity, this policy underscores our commitment to fostering thriving, healthy communities. A Nicotine-Free Generation policy will create a tobacco-free future for our youth that will reduce risks for chronic diseases such as cancer, pulmonary disease, and cardiovascular disease.

Adopting this policy will ensure a public health system that reduces nicotine use through prevention and promotes healthy behavior, paving the way for a healthier next generation. Cambridge Health Alliance encourages the Somerville Board of Health to support and implement the Nicotine-Free Generation policy in Somerville.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Assaad Sayah".

Assaad Sayah, MD
Chief Executive Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance

AFFILIATED WITH:

Beth Israel Deaconess
Medical Center

The logo for Mass General Hospital for Children features a stylized blue and yellow figure to the left of the text "Mass General Hospital for Children".The logo for Harvard School of Dental Medicine features a red shield icon to the left of the text "HARVARD SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE".The logo for Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health features a red shield icon to the left of the text "HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH".The logo for Tufts University School of Medicine features the word "Tufts" in blue to the left of "University" and "School of Medicine" in black.