March 3, 2020

Transportation Finance and Policy Division

Rep. Frank Hornstein
Rep. Connie Bernardy
Rep. John Heinrich
Rep. Sandra Masin
Rep. John Petersburg
Rep. Nolan West
Rep. Lyndon Carlson, Sr.

Rep. Brad Tabke
Rep. Steve Elkins
Rep. Erin Koegel
Rep. Michael Nelson
Rep. Ruth Richardson
Rep. Dan Wolgamott

Rep. Paul Torkelson
Rep. Alice Hausman
Rep. Jon Koznick
Rep. Tim O’Driscoll
Rep. Linda Runbeck
Rep. Cheryl Youakim

RE: HF 3072 (clean air for kids in cars)

Dear Chair Hornstein and Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to support HF 3072, which protects youth from secondhand smoke and e-cigarette aerosol exposure in vehicles.

As the largest health plan in Minnesota, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota is committed to improving the health of all Minnesotans, which is why we strongly support statewide policy change such as this bill.

Minnesota has made great strides in protecting kids and adults from the harms of secondhand smoke, with the passage of the clean indoor air act in 2007 which prohibited smoking in bars and restaurants. Last year, the legislature successfully strengthened the law with the inclusion of e-cigarette aerosol. Minnesotans are counting on us to extend those protections to our cars.

In 2017, Blue Cross released a study showing that each year, smoking claims over 6,000 Minnesota lives and costs our state $7.5 billion in health care costs and lost productivity. The staggering costs of tobacco in both health care costs and loss of life cannot be compared to the loss of profits for those who want to continue to sell these lethal products.

I hope you will take this positive step toward making a smoke-free generation for all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Mark Steffen, M.D., M.P.H.
Vice President, Chief Medical Officer
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

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