

December 1, 2023

Council President Amy Brendmoen
Councilmember Russel Balenger
Councilmember Rebecca Noecker
Councilmember Chris Tolbert

Councilmember Mitra Jalali
Councilmember Nelsie Yang
Councilmember Jane Prince

Re: Ordinance 23-61

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Councilmembers:

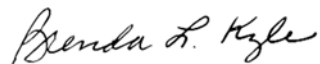
On behalf of the St. Paul Area Chamber and its members, I write to express our support for Ordinance 23-61 and appreciation for Councilmember Noecker's collaborative leadership in bringing this needed solution forward.

Through the abatement process, this ordinance creates a means to address some of the physical concerns facing portions of the skyway system, such as broken glass, stained or dirty floors, trash and graffiti. We agree that this process will help resolve these issues in a more timely manner when a property owner is unresponsive, and credit most building owners that already do an upstanding job in maintaining their portion of the skyway.

We would be remiss not to point out that this is only a partial solution to skyway concerns. The St. Paul Area Chamber recently concluded Year 2 of a three-year project, surveying residents and employees on public safety perceptions in St. Paul. Of the respondents, 80% of downtown St. Paul employees responded that concerns about their safety factored into their decision whether to use the skyways. Along with the physical concerns that will be aided by this ordinance, we need to continue the conversation to address the panhandling, harassment, and illegal activity occurring in the skyway.

The St. Paul Area Chamber appreciates the City's attention to improving our skyway system through this ordinance and the pilot project installing cameras and intercoms. We hope this momentum builds towards additional solutions for the behavioral challenges in the skyway. The Chamber stands ready and willing to engage in these important conversations.

Sincerely,



B Kyle, President and CEO

