

RESOLUTION

Expressing the Philadelphia City Council's firm support for workers at Starbucks in Philadelphia who are attempting to form a union, and urging Starbucks to accept card check neutrality.

WHEREAS, union representation has important benefits for workers, particularly for workers of color, including better pay, benefits, working conditions, and job security. The Union Members 2020 report released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on January 22, 2021 found that in 2020 “[n]onunion workers had median weekly earnings that were 84 percent of earnings for workers who were union members;” and

WHEREAS, on December 6, 2021, Bloomberg reported that U.S. corporations are amassing record profits, explaining that “third-quarter after-tax corporate profits from current production amounted to 11% of gross domestic product,” and “more profits in the three months ended in September than ever before. Not just in dollar terms—something that happens frequently—but as a share of the economy;” and

WHEREAS, on October 28, 2021, Starbucks issued a press release claiming, “Record Q4 and Full Year Fiscal 2021 Results,” and “Consolidated net revenues of \$29.1 billion increased 24% (21% on a 52-week basis) from the prior year;” and

WHEREAS, on September 2, 2021, Gallup reported 68% of adults in the U.S. support labor unions, the highest approval rate since 1965, and 77% of young adults (18-34 year olds) support unions; and

WHEREAS, in December 2021, workers employed at two Starbucks locations in Buffalo, NY, successfully voted to unionize into Starbucks Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and are currently fighting for a first contract; and

WHEREAS, Starbucks executives are notorious for opposing the unionization of their workforce, employing tactics that workers have described as “union busting” and

WHEREAS, On October 13, 2021, WIVB, the CBS affiliate in Buffalo, NY, reported that Starbucks “closed two of its Buffalo-area stores that are attempting to become the first locations in the country to unionize;” and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2021, CNBC reported that the National Labor Relations Board ruled in favor of Starbucks Workers United, when Starbucks attempted to prohibit individual stores from holding unionization votes; and

WHEREAS, on November 21, 2021, Bloomberg reported that “[p]ro-union employees have alleged that in recent weeks Starbucks deployed out-of-town managers to visit their stores and try to dissuade them from unionizing. The employees said they were pressured to attend meetings in which company representatives warned that organizing could lead to the loss of some benefits;” and

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia, as an employer, has long-standing policies of card check neutrality, recognizing a union when the majority of a workforce signs union cards, and committing to allow City employees to discuss unionization free from threats, intimidation, anti-union propaganda, anti-union meetings, and lawsuits; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has a long-standing history of strong labor unions that help maintain good wages, benefits, and working conditions for unionized workplaces in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, baristas working at four Starbucks locations in Philadelphia—at 1945 Callowhill Street, 600 S. 9th Street, 1900 Market Street, and 3401 Walnut Street—have filed petitions with the National Labor Relations Board to unionize their workplaces. The four locations are all seeking to join Starbucks Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU); and

WHEREAS, resolutions of support have been introduced by City Councilmembers in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Chicago to aid Starbucks workers' unionization efforts in those cities; and

WHEREAS, Starbucks workers in Philadelphia are demanding a voice in their workplace and a seat at the table to negotiate wages, benefits, and working conditions, health and safety protections, adequate staffing, seniority pay, and a living wage; and

WHEREAS, This unionization drive will benefit not only Starbucks workers, but all workers in Philadelphia seeking to form a union and collectively fight for better wages, benefits, and working conditions; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Philadelphia, expresses firm support for workers at Starbucks in Philadelphia who are attempting to form a union, and urging Starbucks to accept card check neutrality.

Introduced By:

Councilmember Kendra Brooks
Councilmember Helen Gym

February 24, 2022