



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 3

COUNCILMEMBER KSHAMA SAWANT

January 27, 2022

Dear Councilmember Gobena and Mayor Simpson,

I hope this letter finds you both well.

Congratulations, Mayor Simpson, on your election victory last year! I remember when so many of us were at SeaTac City Hall in 2013, testifying in support of demands like the \$15/hour minimum wage for SeaTac workers.

I would also like to thank you for your solidarity in defeating the right-wing and big-business-backed recall campaign against our socialist City Council office here in Seattle.

Just this past Tuesday, I announced a [City Council resolution](#) in solidarity with the incredible movement launched by Starbucks workers to get unionized. We held a [press conference](#) alongside Starbucks Workers United and several other Seattle unions. The resolution says that Starbucks should immediately stop its shameless union busting, allow the workers to unionize free of intimidation and bargain a fair contract after the unionization. We are calling on the Seattle City Council to formally introduce the resolution on Tuesday, February 1st, and vote on the resolution on Tuesday, February 8th. **I am writing to ask if you will join us urgently and bring forward similar resolutions for a vote on the SeaTac City Council.**

As you know, workers at two Starbucks stores in Buffalo successfully unionized despite threats. Moreover, the workers there went on a five-day strike and forced Starbucks to give paid quarantine time for ALL workers in the company, nationwide, when they're exposed to COVID. This is a stunning victory, and shows what's possible when workers use a collective, fighting strategy.

But we know the workers are taking on a behemoth of a corporation and billionaires like Howard Schultz. I've heard personally from a number of Seattle and Buffalo workers about the vile lengths to which the bosses are going with their union busting. Starbucks executives know what's at stake. If there is a successful union at Starbucks, it will be an unprecedented breakthrough for unionization in the American fast food industry and the private sector as a whole. It will also be a historic opening to organize women, LGBTQ workers, and workers of



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color. For all these reasons, Starbucks and the political establishment are ferociously opposing any further stores from unionizing.

I am sure we fully agree that labor union leaders and progressive elected representatives need to immediately provide solidarity to help the Starbucks workers continue winning unionization battles in stores across America. If we can, as progressive elected representatives, have multiple City Councils pass such resolutions, it will enormously help encourage the workers to keep fighting. And if the three of us take the initiative, I'm confident that it will help build the momentum.

With Seattle being the headquarters of the company, we expect the political establishment here to particularly try and oppose the resolution. Their goal will be to prevent the resolution from being introduced for a vote in the first place. That is an additional reason why I am requesting that you both announce such a resolution as soon as possible next week. Your support and solidarity will be necessary for workers to be able to push back against the establishment Councilmembers and win this resolution here in Seattle.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns, or if there's anything we can do to support your efforts.

In solidarity,

Kshama Sawant
Seattle City Councilmember