



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 3

COUNCILMEMBER KSHAMA SAWANT

NEWS RELEASE

Councilmember Kshama Sawant

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sawant congratulates Starbucks workers for City Council Resolution Victory: “Progressive and socialist elected representatives in every city should tell Starbucks to stop union busting!”

‘Just this morning, we saw how Starbucks executives are firing workers in the Memphis organizing committee. This is outrageous and shameful. We need rallies in Seattle and in cities across the nation to demand the workers are immediately rehired!’

SEATTLE - [Councilmember Kshama Sawant](#) (District 3, Central Seattle), chair of the Council’s Sustainability and Renters’ Rights Committee, issued this statement following the City Council unanimously approving her resolution in solidarity with unionizing Starbucks workers:

“Today’s YES vote by the City Council on this resolution from my office makes Seattle the first city to demand that Starbucks corporate executives and billionaires stop their shameful union busting, intimidation, and firings of courageous workers, and accept majority union votes at their stores. Progressive and socialist elected representatives in every city should tell Starbucks to stop union busting!

“As a rank-and-file member of the American Federation of Teachers Local 1789, I thank my labor siblings in **the [Martin Luther King, Jr. County Labor Council](#) for their full support of this resolution from my office.**

“**Sam Sumpter, President of UAW 4121**, shared this statement from the union in support of Starbucks workers and today’s resolution:

We stand in solidarity with all Starbucks workers who are fighting to unionize and have a fair say in their working conditions. Starbucks executives could accept the democratic voice of workers, but instead they are engaging in disgusting union-busting tactics. Now more than ever, it’s critical for union members across the country to come together in solidarity with Starbucks workers, and build the kind of collective power needed to win this historic fight.

“This resolution comes at a critical moment for unionizing Starbucks workers, as **Sydney Durkin, a Seattle Starbucks worker at the Broadway and Denny store**, explained this morning:

We are dealing with meetings and intimidation; I personally have received a final written warning for union activity, and they will continue to escalate. [Starbucks] is trying to push the envelope of what they can get away with in their union busting, and they will continue to do this unless there is intense public outcry. We thank Kshama Sawant for introducing this resolution, and today we urge all Councilmembers to vote yes on it... The more solidarity we have, the more community support we have, the better fighting chance we have in this fight against those who seek to destroy what we are fighting for.

“On January 25th, my office held a press conference outside of Starbucks’ headquarters alongside unionizing Seattle Starbucks workers, as well as workers from the first unionized Starbucks stores in Buffalo, New York. We were joined by

PROTEC17, UAW 4121, WFSE 1488, CWA 7800, the Bookworkers Union, and Socialist Alternative.

“Gianna Reeve, one of the Buffalo Starbucks workers, spoke to the necessity of this resolution and nation-wide solidarity effort:

“We need to stand together. We cannot do this divided... We need to be here to demand this resolution. [Starbucks] will do exactly what they did in Buffalo, where they are closing stores, threatening partner benefits — they will do this anywhere. They take pride in Seattle being their hometown, but they will absolutely rake their partners through the mud unless we tell them NO. So let’s do it. We cannot stand for this anymore.”

“Unlike December’s scandalous unanimous vote by the City Council Democrats, through which they attempted to end the [\\$4/hour hazard pay for our grocery workers](#), the fact that 5 Democrats voted YES today shows the pressure that be put on the political establishment by working-class courage and organization.

“We will need this kind of pressure, but a thousand-fold, if we are to defeat the vicious union-busting attempts by Starbucks. On Feb. 1, my office held a tri-city [press conference](#) alongside Starbucks workers, Chicago Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez, who has brought a similar resolution to the Chicago City Council, and Minneapolis City Councilmember Robin Wonsley Worlobah, who has announced plans for a resolution. We look forward to seeing these resolutions pass in Chicago and Minneapolis, and we urge all DSA and progressive elected representatives across the country to join us by bringing forward resolutions in solidarity with Starbucks workers in their cities.

“Starbucks workers have already demonstrated the value of having a union and a fighting approach around concrete demands. Soon after winning their union, the Buffalo workers went on a five-day strike and forced the company to concede on a major demand — to give workers paid time for quarantine and self-isolation if they test positive for COVID.

“As the Memphis workers wrote in a [public letter](#) to Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson:

"We are here to fight for our safety and our rights as workers that have been denied and shoved away from us. Please do not bring your so-called 'pro-partner' anti-union campaign to Memphis."

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