



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GREATER BOSTON STARBUCKS WORKERS UNITED

- WHEREAS*, Starbucks workers in over 200 of 9,000 company-operated stores nationally, including here in Boston, have filed to unionize, demonstrating their desire to be represented by unions such as Starbucks Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Employees of sixteen Starbucks stores in Massachusetts have filed to unionize, including seven in Boston located at 1304 Commonwealth Avenue near Packard's Corner (Allston), 217 Western Avenue at Continuum (Lower Allston), 1948 Beacon Street at Cleveland Circle (Brighton), 364 Brookline Avenue at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (Longwood Medical Area), 443 Boylston Street (Back Bay), 125 Summer Street (Downtown), and 627 Tremont Street (South End); *and*
- WHEREAS*, Ballot counts on April 11, 2022 resulted in two Boston-area stores unanimously becoming the first Starbucks to unionize in Massachusetts – the Commonwealth Avenue store in Allston by 11 to 0 and the Coolidge Corner store on 277 Harvard Street in Brookline by 14 to 0; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Workers of Starbucks stores at Continuum in Lower Allston, Cleveland Circle, and Beth Israel in the Longwood Medical Area will have ballots counted on May 3, 2022, and more stores are anticipated to file for unionization and hold elections in the months to come; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Starbucks baristas are among the service industry's essential workers, serving members of the public despite working conditions impacted by workforce shortages and shifting public health safety measures throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and they deserve to have a voice on the job and a seat at the table to negotiate wages, benefits, and working conditions; *and*
- WHEREAS*, In response to its employees' organizing efforts, Starbucks has launched an intensive anti-union campaign to thwart the union effort, and on July 21, 2021, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that Starbucks unlawfully retaliated against two Philadelphia baristas in response to their unionization efforts and ordered the company to cease and desist from interfering with their workers' rights (04-CA-252338, et al.; JD-27-21); *and*
- WHEREAS*, On December 9, 2021, Starbucks workers at the Elmwood store in Buffalo, New York voted 19 to 8 to unionize despite months of union-busting tactics including the company reportedly dispatching more than 100 executive and management personnel from other parts of the country to twenty Buffalo-area stores, attempting to stop unionization with threats of losing benefits and temporarily closing stores, frequent group "listening sessions" and one-on-one meetings with Starbucks workers, all in an attempt to pressure the workers to "Vote No"; *and*
- WHEREAS*, On February 23, 2022, the NLRB denied the Starbucks' petition for voting by regional district, ruling instead that Starbucks workers may organize for a vote store-by-store; *and*
- WHEREAS*, On February 8, 2022, seven Starbucks employees involved in unionization efforts were terminated in Memphis, Tennessee; on March 15, 2022, the NLRB Regional Director for Phoenix, Arizona issued a complaint accusing Starbucks of retaliating against two employees who sought to unionize their store (28-CA-289622); on April 13, 2022, NLRB investigators in Phoenix filed a second complaint alleging mistreatment of employees, including discipline, interrogation, and coercive statements (28-CA-291044); *and*

- WHEREAS,* Starbucks workers organizing in Boston have reportedly been subject to increased corporate pressure and surveillance, voicing shared experiences of upper management and corporate personnel, many whom baristas have never met, sitting in their cafes and observing baristas for several hours a day, while workers from two Greater Boston stores have additionally reported store surveillance technology upgrades soon after filing petitions to unionize; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Starbucks workers throughout Boston have reported being subject to captive audience sessions in which corporate personnel shared misleading and/or inaccurate information about the union in order to persuade workers not to unionize, and workers have complained of a lack of communication from management as to whether such meetings are mandatory; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Greater Boston Starbucks workers have been required to attend one-on-one meetings with Store Managers, and occasionally District Managers, in which they received misleading and inflammatory information about unions and been informed they will not be eligible for summer raises or other employment benefits because of the ongoing union drive; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Local Starbucks workers have reported inaccurate and misleading messaging regarding the petitioning process being posted by corporate officials throughout their stores, voicing frustration of messaging not only being inflammatory and misleading regarding the petition process, but also perpetuating false narratives of workplace tension; *and*
- WHEREAS,* On both a local and national level, Starbucks workers have reported drastic labor cuts at their stores, resulting in understaffed shifts and unsafe working conditions, which workers believe to be a tactic meant to restrain employee interactions; *and*
- WHEREAS,* On both a local and national level, Starbucks workers have reported strict enforcement of rules and regulations previously enforced loosely or not at all prior to unionization efforts, including, but not limited to, the store's dress code, late policy, time off requests, and scheduling changes, and Starbucks workers in Boston and Massachusetts have reported being asked to sign agreements acknowledging this change of enforcement; *and*
- WHEREAS,* On February 15, 2022, Greater Boston Starbucks baristas – with the support of their community, fellow workers, and activists – held a rally and march in solidarity with the seven unionizing Starbucks baristas fired shortly after filing their NLRB petition, and have also worked with local unionizing café workers, including those of Pavement and Darwin, to foster a supportive community for baristas to share their unionization experiences; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Starbucks baristas have remained resilient in the face of the company's anti-union campaign, while stressing that despite immense showings of community solidarity, they remain deeply disappointed in the corporation's continued attempts to interfere with their right to organize;
NOW THEREFORE BE IT
- RESOLVED:* That the Boston City Council, in meeting assembled, expresses its support for the Starbucks workers unionizing in our community and calls upon Starbucks to immediately renounce its anti-union tactics, agree to fair election principles, negotiate in good faith, and work with its unionized workers to make Starbucks a truly progressive company; *AND BE IT FURTHER*
- RESOLVED:* That the Clerk of the City of Boston be, and hereby is, respectfully requested to transmit suitably attested copies of this Resolution to the Starbucks Corporate Chief Executive Officer and Director of Government Affairs, and to representatives of Starbucks Workers United.

Filed in City Council April 25, 2022