



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-0571, **Version:** 1

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Recommendation to request City Attorney to prepare resolution to support fair and free union elections for Starbucks workers in Long Beach.

The first Long Beach Starbucks to file to join Starbucks Workers United, the new union representing stores across America, is in the 2nd District in the City of Long Beach, located at Redondo and 7th. The election among their workers has concluded and votes are being tallied on May 13, 2022 as this item is submitted, along with a Lakewood location. Another Starbucks location in Long Beach, in Belmont Shore, is currently in the process of setting up their union election after filing their initial petition. Supporting Starbucks workers in their efforts to unionize would empower them to collectively bargain with their multinational employer for better wages, better working conditions, and overall greater dignity at work and better quality of life.

Over the past several years, the Long Beach City Council has endeavored to protect workers' rights and more recently to enable a fair and equitable recovery from COVID-19 for our community, combatting the K-shaped recovery seen across America. Supporting the right of workers to organize and advocate for better conditions, without fear of unjust reprisal, is a key component of any equitable recovery.

Workers at Starbucks locations report difficulties doing their jobs due to COVID-19, supply shortages, constant movement of team members between stores, customers ignoring COVID-19 precautions, and other issues. Early in the pandemic, Starbucks closed some stores, but the pandemic highlighted how hard service industry jobs are, and highlighted the importance of workers having the ability to advocate for better living standards.

Early on in the pandemic, there was actually an increased pay rate when Starbucks employees were considered essential workers, and then after stores started opening the pay rates returned to pre-pandemic levels. The pandemic, as we know, continues to cause difficult working conditions and an elevated risk level.

That is ultimately the reason that Starbucks workers demand a seat at the table, to decide democratically what they want to see in their workplaces, in the risks they face and the compensation they earn. A union is the tool by which workers can directly hold their distant corporate leaders accountable for good working conditions and equitable pay and treatment.

These workers have faced public and corporate reprisals, documented through numerous complaints across America to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and have faced aggressive anti-worker efforts from their CEO and corporate officers during their attempts to

unionize. This includes a May 10 report that the NLRB filed a complaint against Starbucks alleging over 200 violations of the National Labor Relations Act. A resolution of support by the City Council will signal to workers in our city, to residents and visitors young and old, that their elected leaders and their community are with the workers and support their efforts to empower themselves through collective action. It is a worthy signal to send.

**STATEMENT OF URGENCY:**

Approval of this recommendation is urgent to ensure the City of Long Beach demonstrates strong support for free and fair union elections as local Starbucks workers at multiple locations are currently undergoing election processes.

**EQUITY LENS STATEMENT:**

Staff will consider issues of equity and access with any program proposals brought forward to ensure the City's commitment for everyone reaching their highest level of health and potential for a successful life, regardless of background, neighborhood, or identity.

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to time constraints.

Approve recommendation.

CINDY ALLEN COUNCILWOMAN,  
SECOND DISTRICT

MARY ZENDEJAS COUNCILWOMAN,  
FIRST DISTRICT

REX RICHARDSON VICE MAYOR,  
NINTH DISTRICT