United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 10, 2025

Brian Niccol
Chief Executive Officer
Starbucks Corporation
2401 Utah Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134

Dear Mr. Niccol:

We are writing to express concern regarding Starbucks' failure to reach a fair first contract with its baristas. Additionally, we have heard of a troubling return to union busting, which has impeded the ability of Starbucks workers—many of whom are our constituents—to exercise their statutory and constitutional right to organize.

In February 2024, Starbucks and Workers United announced a path forward to commit to negotiating a foundational framework for contracts, establishing a fair process for organizing, and resolving outstanding legal issues. We were hopeful that the company would abide by this commitment and bargain in good faith with Starbucks workers who exercised their right to form a union.

We understand that the parties had been making progress towards a fair contract in 2024 and achieved 33 Tentative Agreements to date. However, we are troubled by reports that since you started your role as CEO in September 2024, the company has failed to put forward a serious economic proposal, backtracking on the previously agreed-upon path forward. This prompted Workers United to file an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge alleging Starbucks' failure to bargain in good faith and undermining the representative status of the union. Further, since December 2024, Workers United has filed over 100 new ULPs, many of which allege retaliation against union baristas for union organizing or partaking in protected union activity.

As you well know Starbucks is not a poor company. Last year Starbucks made over $3.6 billion in profit and paid out nearly $5 billion in stock buybacks and dividends. In fact, in the first 3 quarters of the year, Starbucks made $1.7 billion in profit and paid out over $2 billion in dividends. Last year, you made $95 million in compensation for the four months you worked in 2024, roughly 6,666 times more than what your average worker was paid for the entire year.

Despite that extravagant spending on executives and shareholders, Starbucks refuses to reach an agreement with its own workers even though you are less than one average day's sales apart from a contract. To make matters worse, Starbucks recently began closing stores across the country and laying off hundreds of workers as part its $1 billion restructuring plan. It is clear that Starbucks has the money to reach a fair agreement with its workers.

Starbucks must reverse course from its current posture, resolve its existing labor disputes, and bargain a fair contract in good faith with these employees.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Ruben Gallego
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator