



Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

Strength in Numbers 95,000

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LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

Ex-Starbucks CEO Schultz illegally threatened union supporter, NLRB judge rules



Administrative Law Judge Brian Gee in Los Angeles said in a decision issued on Friday, October 2, 2024 that the comment Schultz made during a "listening tour" last year amounted to an illegal threat against the worker, Madison Hall. The judge ruled that former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz violated labor laws. The judge found that Schultz's comment to a union-supporting employee, suggesting they should "go work for another company" if they were unhappy, constituted an illegal threat. This decision underscores the NLRB's stance that such statements can coerce employees from exercising their rights to unionize.

With this final panel decision, Starbucks is ordered to cease and desist from impliedly threatening employees if they engage in union activities or restraining and coercing employees from exercising their rights. Starbucks stores in the area where the incident occurred in Long Beach, Calif. are required to post a notice reminding employees of their rights to unionize.

In recent months, the National Labor Relations Board has issued new union election rules and decisions favorable to unions and employees that make it easier for employees to obtain union representation, redefine the standard for protected concerted activity subject to protection under the National Labor Relations Act and shorten the time frames for elections.