

**Starbucks Shareholder Meeting – Proposal # 6**  
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**The National Center for Public Policy Research, March 23, 2016**

I'm Justin Danhof of the National Center for Public Policy Research, and I rise to move proposal #6.

Our proposal asks the company to protect its workers from potential discrimination. In 2014, the CEO of the tech company Mozilla was forced from his job because he contributed to a 2008 California referendum. Approximately half of American workers can legally face workplace discipline or termination for engaging in political activity outside of work. In light of this, my organization submitted proposals to Starbucks and over 30 other corporations asking them to voluntarily protect their employees' right to engage in legal political and civic activities during their off-hours without fear of retribution on the job.

Most corporations that we approached engaged with us, and over a dozen major companies adopted our proposal as policy, including: Pepsi, Time Warner, Walmart and General Electric. However, Starbucks petitioned the SEC to try to block our proposal.

Free speech and free association are under increasing attack. Some politicians want to regulate speech by broadcast journalists. Colleges are erecting "free speech zones" that – despite the name – limit speech, and now this trend has entered the corporate arena.

While Mr. Eich and others have been run off the job for political beliefs, other corporations, such as Facebook and Twitter, are limiting political speech.

It's not hard to envision a scenario in which a conservative or libertarian Starbucks employee feels ostracized to the point of reducing her or his political and civic activity. The company has a reputation of being left-leaning. CEO Howard Schultz is a prominent liberal who many on the left hope will run for president. If a conservative employee's direct superior is also politically left-leaning, she or he might feel compelled to squash her or his political activities. Now, to be clear, the current culture is predominately anti-conservative, but our proposal would also protect liberal employees from potential discrimination.

The facts are simple. In the current political climate, there is a totalitarian effort to silence certain speech. Starbucks employees may curb their political and civic activity out of a rational fear of retribution at work. While the company's executive team may think this would never happen, it can't be certain unless it has a firm policy in place to protect its workers. Please join me in supporting proposal #6.

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