

**From:** [Kera Peterson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul Ward1](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward2](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward3](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward6](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward7](#)  
**Subject:** Ord 20-21  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 2:35:54 PM

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Dear Council President Brendmoen and City Councilmembers:

I write today on behalf of the Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation (SPRLF) to comment on the City of Saint Paul's proposed Hospitality Workers Right to Recall ordinance (Ord 20-21). The Saint Paul Regional Federation is comprised of 150 affiliated unions and more than 50,000 union members living in the Twin Cities East Metro, including more than 15,000 union members who live in the City of Saint Paul. UNITE HERE Local 17 and the hospitality workers they represent are part of the SPRLF.

As you know, hospitality workers across Minnesota are experiencing an unprecedented job crisis. According to a report created by UNITE HERE Local 17, employment in the leisure and hospitality sector collapsed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 100,000 people working in the sector were displaced between April 2020 and April 2021. The SPRLF is grateful to the Saint Paul City Council for considering an ordinance to establish rights for hospitality workers who have suffered loss of employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ord 20-21 is important public policy because it creates an orderly path back to jobs that workers lost through no fault of their own. Union hotels in Saint Paul have laid-off between 39% and 84% of their staff, and it is reasonable to assume that non-union properties have laid off staff at similar rates. A significant portion of these laid-off workers are women and people of color. Ord 20-21 establishes hospitality workers' right to return to the jobs that they held pre-pandemic, as business allows, ensuring that women and people of color do not have to navigate the return to work in a labor market rife with racial disparities on their own.

Experienced workers know their employers' internal processes and can best anticipate customer needs to provide the best service possible. Ord 20-21 establishes a clear process for workers and employers that will result in trained staff returning to work. We may not know how long it will take for Saint Paul's hospitality and tourism industries to recover, but this ordinance offers experienced workers some certainty that they will be at the heart of this recovery.

Ord 20-21 will benefit individual workers and their families and businesses in the City of Saint Paul and will ultimately assist in the City of St. Paul making the fullest economic recovery possible. On behalf of the SPRLF, thank you for your efforts to enact this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely yours,

Kera Peterson

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*Kera Peterson*

President

Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

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