Received 10/20/25
CCMTG

Downtown Workers Letter Opposing Burlington Forward

To Burlington's Mayor and City Councilors,

We, the undersigned workers, issue this open letter to oppose the misnamed resolution, "Burlington Forward," currently under consideration in the Burlington City Council. It will not take the city forward, but backward.

We are in the midst of a social crisis in Burlington, our state, and the entire country. Its causes are obvious: jobs do not pay livable wages; housing is unaffordable; and healthcare as well as social services are inadequate and inaccessible. The federal and state governments' deep cuts to funding will only exacerbate this crisis.

Backed by local millionaires and businesses, the Burlington Forward resolution unsurprisingly does not address any of its causes. Instead, it advocates spending money on failed law and order policies that will make our social crisis worse. It proposes that the city hire more police, arrest and jail more people, create volunteer public safety teams to issue citations, evict homeless from the encampments, and ban syringe services from the business district.

These policies will waste money on policing and incarceration in an attempt to increase profits for businesses downtown. And all of this is happening while Howard Center and UVM Medical Center are cutting unionized jobs and critical services. On top of that, we face Medicaid cuts this January that will deprive 60,000 Vermonters of healthcare, making them more prone to illnesses, homelessness, and addiction. The cuts also threaten unionized institutions with yet more layoffs and speedups.

The resolution's law and order response will not address these harms but add to them by harassing, arresting, jailing, and evicting people. Already, the city has paid out over $1.5 million since 2019 in cases of police discrimination and brutality, especially against Black and Brown people. Moreover, its call for ~~unionized city~~ workers to join volunteer patrols will put pressure and potentially undue burdens on an already thin and over-stretched workforce that itself has been the object of austerity measures.

We call on the Mayor and City Council to vote down this resolution and pursue real solutions. These include taxing the rich to fund education, programs for jobs with livable wages, affordable housing, single-payer healthcare, accessible syringe services and counseling for drug addiction, and social services for those with mental illnesses.

Burlington should set an example of caring for people, not punishing them. The Mayor and City Council, service providers, and its unions should unite to pressure the state government to fund

our community. That is the only way to overcome our social crisis and guarantee that Burlington becomes safe, equitable, and affordable for all.

Name	Signature	
Greer Welte	[signature]	Always Full Asian Mtns
Taliesin Tutso	[signature]	Insomnia Cookies
Zoe DePaolo	[signature]	Insomnia Cookies
Lorelie Kepreles	[signature]	Seratoga Olive Oil C
Joshy Pellerin	Joshy	Watercolors by Joshy
Abby Becker	[signature]	(Anon Business on Church St)
Zuri JdG	[signature]	Garcia's
[illegible]	[signature]	CST
Dahlia Laby	[signature]	Danforth Pewter
Quigley Lyden	[signature]	Hunny Mustard
Anonymous	[signature]	Artemus cafe
Tom Matthews	[signature]	anonymous
Patrick Donnelly	[signature]	anonymous
Ian Edgar	[signature]	Mad River Distillery
Nicholas Raney	[signature]	Mad River Distillery
David Curtis	[signature]	anonymous business ez the park
Etta Harrison		American Flatbread
[signature]		↓

our community. That is the only way to overcome our social crisis and guarantee that Burlington becomes safe, equitable, and affordable for all.

Name	Signature	
Drew		Phoenix Books
Hannah		Garcias
WARREN		Little Istanbul *
Sofia		4TZD (Fortnite)
Richie		Artemus/BAMM
Sammie		Artemus
Gabrielle		Tradewinds
Brynn		Scarlet Water
Juniper		Global Pathways
Sophia		Gaku Ramen
RAJ		Caligulas
Arcadia		Pepper Palace
Andy		Catamount Convenience *
Emily	~~Deborah~~	Whim *
DAVID		Catamount Store
Triza		Whizbangs!
Liban		whizbangs
Kyle		Ben & Jerry's

Name	Signature	
Sonia		Wild lark * *
Subana		Bickford * *
Dakota		Crow
Amanda		Urban & Senator Sanders office
Brandi		Lulu *
Amanda A.		Fear + Loathing
Bradley		Fear + loathing
Cvetko		Fear + Loathing

Name	Signature	
Oscar Davenport		Vermont Pub & brewery
Katie Lignore		VT Pub + Brewery