

Members, Legislation Committee
c/o Alder Charles Decker
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Members of the Legislation Committee,

My name is Caroline Smith, a resident of New Haven living in Ward 7. Although this letter reflects my own views, my perspective has been informed by my experiences as Chair of the Downtown-Wooster Square Community Management Team.

I'm writing in support of the Worker Recall Ordinance. With the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals and families in New Haven have been hit deeply hard. The pandemic has compounded existing racial injustices with loss of employment, impact on small businesses, and decreased financial stability disproportionately impacting Black and Latinx residents. In particular the hospitality industry, which employs majority non-white and female-identifying individuals, has been steeply impacted by COVID-19 — with a slow recovery on the horizon.

Right now, it is critical to work collectively to ensure we are able to rebuild as we emerge from this crisis. The Worker Recall Ordinance, by providing stability and security to hotelworkers, is an example of a policy that would help ensure that New Haven is able to rebuild more equitably and resilient – not less. I'm excited for New Haven to join other cities across the country in leading on this important legislation.

Downtown is the home to our city's hotel industry. These hotels are so often an introduction to New Haven for many, a hub of activity and events, and, so critically, a force for stable employment for many individuals for decades. Having a job at a hotel for so many means access to healthcare, a full dinner on the table every night, and gifts for the upcoming holiday. Supporting the Worker Recall Ordinance is an opportunity to ensure our values of equity, solidarity, and care for our neighbors are realized in the city we all love.

Sincerely,

Caroline Tanbee Smith
Resident, City of New Haven