

## **“This is My Space Needle” RALLY AND MARCH**

***Space Needle workers rallied Friday morning to reject company’s offer of raises with strings attached.***

**CONTACT:** Abby Lawlor | (206) 963-6458 | [abby@8.unitehere.org](mailto:abby@8.unitehere.org) | @uniteherelocal8

SEATTLE - Space Needle workers and political, labor and community supporters rallied Friday to reject the Space Needle’s recent offer of raises with unacceptable strings attached.

The event began with a picket at the base of Space Needle. Workers carried picket signs reading “This is My Space Needle” and chanted “What do we want? *Job Security!* When do we want it? *Now!*”

Space Needle workers recently ended a month-long effort at mediation with their employer and are continuing their fight for raises, protection from losing their jobs through subcontracting, and union rights.

The picket was followed by words of support from City Councilmembers Bruce Harrell and Kshama Sawant. Also in attendance were Councilmembers Jean Godden and Mike O’Brien.

“You have a strong council who understands,” said Councilmember Harrell. “We will prevail because we are on the right side.”

“The majority of city councilmembers and candidates support Space Needle workers,” said Councilmember Sawant.

Bargaining committee member and Space Needle Barista Holly Hodson told the crowd, “I’ve been a hard-working and loyal employee for a decade. I want there to be a little bit more standing between me and unemployment than a politely worded request. We need a guarantee of real job security. As Space Needle workers right now, we all have to ask ourselves--what would we do if we lost our jobs?”

The company’s latest proposal offered raises that were conditional on workers sacrificing job security protections and accepting unprecedented restrictions on their access to union representation.

Lee Plaster, a banquet server who has worked at the Space Needle for 25 years, told those assembled, “I can’t get by with just this one job. This whole week, I’ve been spending time at my second job at a hotel downtown. My income from the Space Needle has dropped drastically in the last four years.”

In a written statement of support, Councilmember John Okamoto wrote, “I am disheartened to hear that Space Needle workers have not received a raise in over 1,000 days, and I believe that a raise should not have to come at the expense of job security.”

Following the rally, the crowd marched to Space Needle corporate headquarters on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There, Space Needle workers went inside the corporate offices to deliver the message that the Space Needle’s poison candy offer was unacceptable.

In a separate statement, Local 8 has notified Space Needle ownership that workers will return to mediation when the company is ready to discuss real subcontracting solutions and to cease its efforts to deny workers access to their union.

“I'm a part of this fight, and I'm going to stay in this fight one day longer than the Space Needle, because I know firsthand how great this company could be to work for. I've seen that and been part of that in the past. I'm fighting so that we can all get the raises and job security we deserve, so that this company can return to the great place it used to be,” said Plaster.

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UNITE HERE Local 8, the hospitality union of the Pacific Northwest, represents nearly 5,000 workers in hospitality and foodservice throughout Washington and Oregon, including SkyCity restaurant employees, banquet servers, elevator operators, greeters, and other workers at the Space Needle. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://www.unitehere8.org>