

To Whom It May Concern:

I am Karmen Smith IX, a member of the WaterBottle Co-op, writing in support of SB0085. I have been a worker-owner at WaterBottle for approximately 10 months.

I have worked in many fields, but have rarely felt like an integral part of the mission and purpose of my former employers' workspaces. Most of the time, working in corporate/regular American workspaces did not make one feel respected for what they could bring to the table or a valued asset of any kind.

I became a member of the WaterBottle Co-op "Family" after hearing the mission, vision and purposes of its founder, David Lidz. Lifting up communities through employment and affordable housing is something that I can really get behind and feel like I am finally making a difference in my community and others that have been neglected for too long.

As the daughter of a Real Estate Broker who was a Realist because of the times in which he worked, I could relate to the idea of giving workers and tenants a chance to own a part of what they spend so much time trying to build and maintain.

Worker cooperatives are an innovative way for each stakeholder to be empowered and to have his/her voice heard when it comes to issues that impact him/her in the workplace and in the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my insight on the importance of including cooperatives as a deserving framework in which businesses can operate.

Respectfully,

Karmen Smith IX

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