

TikTok stars boycott Amazon in activism push

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TikTok influencers reason that the power to reach tens of millions of young internet users comes with a responsibility to take stances on matters of equity or social fairness.

TikTok influencers boasting collectively more than 51 million followers say they won't work with Amazon until the e-commerce colossus

delivers key concessions to workers and halts anti-union efforts.

It's the latest example of creators lending their online stage to a cause on the massively growing platform more known for dance crazes and catchy songs.

An advocacy group calling itself Gen-Z for Change said it coordinated the pledge from more than 70 popular TikTok talents to stand in solidarity with Amazon workers through a "People Over Prime Pledge."

The vow references Amazon Prime—a paid subscription from the online giant that includes benefits like rapid deliveries—but also the pressure it puts on those working to fill the orders.

"We are calling on Amazon to listen to their workers and make tangible changes to their workplace environment," the group said in a letter, noting that TikTok has more than a billion users.

"Unless changes are made, we will prevent Amazon from monetizing one of the largest social media platforms in the world."

The coalition is pushing for the firm's workers to get a minimum hourly wage of \$30, improved [medical leave](#) and easing of productivity requirements.

The group is also calling on Amazon, which has long resisted unionization efforts in its US facilities, to stop its opposition.

"We have always known how essential creators are to the Amazon marketing model," Gen-Z for Change director of strategy Elise Joshi told AFP on Monday.

"Creators, especially TikTok creators, are the gateway to [young people](#);

we are reclaiming that power," the 20-year-old added.

An Amazon Influencer Program launched five years ago offers creators at TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and other social media platforms ways to make money by recommending products in posts and steering buyers to the e-commerce service.

Some, but not all coalition members—who began last week refusing to do business with Amazon, including direct sponsorships and use of the e-commerce titan's storefront—were associated with that partnership initiative.



As a group of TikTok creators calls on Amazon to support labor unions at its warehouses, the e-commerce giant says worker well-being is a top priority and it has spend billions to achieve that goal.

'Comfortable pace'

The demands sought in this case are those put forth by labor organizers who early this year won a vote to launch the first union shop at one of Amazon's US warehouses.

The second largest employer in the United States behind retail mega-chain Walmart, Amazon has fiercely opposed attempts to unionize workers.

"The health, safety and welfare of our employees is our top priority," Amazon spokesman Paul Flanigan said in response to an AFP inquiry.

"We are committed to giving our employees the resources they need to be successful, creating time for regular breaks and a comfortable pace of work," he added.

Amazon has invested billions of dollars in [safety measures](#), technology and more intended to protect employees, Flanigan said.

Joshi dismissed Amazon's response as "boilerplate" and hoped it would inspire social media influencers to get involved in the campaign.

TikTok activism

Gen-Z for Change organizers reasoned that the power to reach tens of millions of young internet users comes with responsibility to advocate for social justice.

"We feel obligated because we have a large platform and a passion for equity," said 19-year-old Connor Hesse, a content specialist at Gen-Z for Change and TikTok creator with some 2.3 million subscribers.

Mobilizing on social media for Amazon employee rights can prompt other companies to improve worker conditions to avoid being targets of similar campaigns, argued Aly, a TikTok creator behind the account [usa.mom.in.germany](https://www.tiktok.com/@usa.mom.in.germany).

Gen-Z for Change has aimed pro-labor campaigns at coffee chain Starbucks and Kroger supermarket group.

TikTok users in 2020 took credit for duping former US president Donald Trump into bragging that an election rally in Oklahoma was going to be overflowing because of online ticket requests, only to have him met with a below-capacity audience.

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