

# Amazon union push at California warehouse stalls

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A group of Amazon workers at a fulfillment center in Moreno Valley, California, seeking to join the independent Amazon Labor Union have withdrawn a petition to hold a union election, mere weeks after

launching their campaign, the National Labor Relations Board confirmed.

The move Friday to withdraw the petition came after Amazon raised doubts about whether organizers seeking to unionize the company's ONT8 fulfillment center had gathered enough [worker](#) signatures to hold a [union election](#). To hold an election supervised by the National Labor Relations Board, unions must show that they have gathered signatures of support from at least 30% of workers eligible to vote.

Union leaders described the move as a temporary setback, and not a signal that the group of workers, which calls itself United 4 Change ONT8, are ending the unionization push.

The group filed the election petition Oct. 11, marking the first time workers at an Amazon facility in California had formally sought a union election. In the petition, Amazon Labor Union indicated that it sought to represent an 800-worker unit.

Amazon sent a letter to the NLRB on Oct. 18 formally challenging the the ONT8 election petition. The company disputed that 800 worker number, saying the actual number of current Amazon employees in the unit at ONT8 is 2,645, more than three times the size the union organizers estimated, an attorney representing Amazon said in an Oct. 20 filing with the NLRB.

With a significantly larger pool of workers eligible to vote it was thus "highly unlikely" the Amazon Labor Union had successfully gathered signatures of support from at least 30%, Amazon's attorney wrote.

Chris Smalls, president of the Amazon Labor Union, and Nannette Plascencia, a worker at ONT8 leading the union effort at the facility, said the group plans to resubmit its election petition in a few weeks.

Smalls said in an email that Amazon casting doubt on worker support for the union was "just Amazon using it as a union busting tactic." He said withdrawing the petition was part of a necessary process, and that his union had gone through similar motions in another campaign and still gone on to secure an election win.

The withdrawal is "nothing to worry about," Smalls said.

Filing an election petition on the early side "was a helpful move" to secure [accurate data](#) on ONT8's workforce; he said the union now "can resubmit when we feel is best."

During its union drive at an Amazon facility in Staten Island called JFK8, the Amazon Labor Union similarly withdrew its initial election petition. The NLRB had told the union that it had not collected enough worker signatures; the union re filed the petition successfully in January, about two months later.

The Amazon Labor Union won a watershed union election at the JFK8 facility in April—the first successful unionization effort at any of the company's U.S. warehouses.

Thus far, the union has not been able to secure a second win, losing an election at the neighboring LDJ5 facility in May and another in Albany last week.

Amazon has long discouraged unions and has been accused repeatedly of engaging in anti-union tactics in violation of federal law.

Amazon spokesperson Paul Flanigan said in an email that the company was notified Friday that the ONT8 election [petition](#) had been withdrawn.

"Our focus remains on listening directly to our employees and

continuously improving on their behalf," Flanigan said.

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