

May 16, 2018

**VIA CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURNED RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Kevin Johnson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Starbucks Corporation  
2401 Utah Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98134

Dear Mr. Johnson,

As President and CEO of Enough Is Enough (EIE), a nationwide 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to making the Internet safe for children and families, I am writing to follow up with you personally in regard to the commitment Starbucks made publically via a statement to CNN in 2016 to voluntarily provide safe WiFi in Starbucks restaurants nationwide. This was in direct response to EIE's Porn Free WiFi Campaign, in which a coalition of more than 75 partner organizations and 50,000 petitions were sent to your predecessor, Howard Schulz, in April 2014, respectfully requesting that Starbucks lead corporate America to voluntarily filter child porn and porn on your public WiFi network.

While none can deny the joy and benefit of being served up a cup of hot, fresh coffee, Starbucks continues to serve up free, unrestricted WiFi to its customers, opening up the door for patrons to view graphic or obscene pornography, view or distribute child pornography (an illegal crime) or engage in sexual predation activity. Other corporate giants such as McDonalds and Subway, Chick fil-A and Panera Bread have already grabbed the reigns by implementing filtered WiFi in locations nationwide. We are disappointed to see that Starbucks has not taken action, despite a public commitment.

On July 15, 2016, a Starbucks spokesperson made the following public statement to CNN stating: *"We are in the process of evaluating a global protocol to address this in all of our company owned stores, and are in active discussions with organizations on implementing the right, broad-based solution that would remove any illegal and other egregious content."*

Following that statement, I authorized my organization and our coalition partners to launch a nation-wide campaign to "thank Starbucks" following its commitment to filter its WiFi services; yet, two years since that commitment was made, no action has taken place. I have personally made numerous attempts to follow up with Starbucks as to when (and if) Starbucks intends to follow through.

I can assure you that modern day WiFi filters can be specifically tailored to filter only child pornography and pornography, which is what we have asked and what Starbucks has pledged to do publically. The old excuse of inadvertent blocking of appropriate content is just that, an excuse that no longer has validity.



As stated in our initial communications, Internet pornography has become increasingly accessible and freely available, and is one of the biggest threats to our children's online safety. The stories speak for themselves. Here are just a few:

- A 36-year-old Nashville man was just sentenced to 105 years for taking videos while molesting children and then “distributed the material on the internet, using public available WiFi connections in an attempt to thwart detection by law enforcement.”
- A 73-year-old South Carolina man sat in his car with his laptop to use the WiFi offered by Lowe's to view young boys engaged in sex acts and young girls clothed in just their underwear.

Mr. Johnson, Starbucks must follow through on its commitment to protect patrons from the unintended consequences of unfiltered WiFi. By implementing a safe, friendly WiFi policy and effective filtering in your venues here in the United States, Starbucks will:

- Prevent children, teens and other patrons from being exposed to pornography and child pornography when using your WiFi services;
- Prevent children and teens from easily bypassing filters and other parental control tools set up by their parents on their smart phones, tablets and laptops by logging onto Starbucks' open hotspots;
- Prevent sexual predators from accessing illegal child pornography and flying under the radar of law enforcement by using your free WiFi services;
- Avoid a potential hostile work environment for Starbucks employees;
- Reinforce your hard-earned family-friendly brand;
- Establish your company as a leader in the USA on Internet safety policies; and
- Maintain consistency regarding corporate best practices and family-friendly policies.

In the United Kingdom, Starbucks has voluntarily implemented filtering to block access to illegal pornography and child pornography, thereby establishing a safe WiFi environment at all of its locations in the U.K. [Its website states](#): "Our WiFi is approved under the Friendly WiFi scheme. Wherever you see the 'Friendly WiFi' logo, this means the public WiFi service at the venue is filtered..."

When you provide your customers with a safe, filtered WiFi experience, you will qualify to join the “Friendly WiFi ” certification program which will allow you to advertise that your public WiFi is safe. Think of it as the equivalent of a Good Housekeeping™ seal of approval in the digital age. The Friendly WiFi America initiative is managed in the U.S. by my company, DRH Enterprises LLC, which entered into an exclusive agreement with RDI, Ltd. of the United Kingdom - the company behind the “Friendly WiFi” certification.

Imagine this positive message in the media: *“Starbucks Restaurants are pleased to become the first company in America to join the “Friendly WiFi” certification to protect children and adult patrons from viewing inappropriate Internet content in our restaurants. By proactively filtering child pornography and pornography on our public WiFi daily, Starbucks is committed to providing a safe and family-friendly environment to give you and your family peace of mind.”*



Starbucks needs a “win” in the court of public opinion following the national outrage that resulted from two black men being arrested in the Philadelphia location without cause or merit. In the days that followed that incident, you told the national media: “Creating an environment that is both safe and welcoming for everyone is paramount for every store” and that we (patrons) “could and should expect more from us.”

Mr. Johnson, patrons *do* expect more from Starbucks. We expect that when a customer walks through your doors, they can’t be secretly viewing the rape of a young child or viewing pornographic content simply because Starbucks’ failure to filter allows them to do so. Convicted sex offenders and pedophiles should not be able to view such content on Starbucks’ dime and watch a child get victimized over and over. This very scene could potentially be the next national scandal that Starbucks may find itself responding to if nothing is done to address access to Internet pornography and images harming children.

The public relations concerns potentially resulting from doing nothing to filter WiFi could be much more damaging if customers access free, hard-core illegal pornography, and even worse, child abuse images, known as child pornography. (A 2016 headline read: “[McDonalds WiFi filters porn, so you’ll need to go to Starbucks instead](#)”).

With that, in good faith, we will wait 30 days to hear back from Starbucks to show evidence that it is following through on its public commitment to filter its WiFi nationwide. In the event no progress has been made, EIE will engage its Safe WiFi Coalition of over 75 NGO groups, the 50,000 petition signors and the national media to announce Starbucks’ failure to follow through on its commitment made almost two years ago. Of course, it is our hope that won’t be the case. Starbucks has an exceptional opportunity to put its best foot forward by displaying corporate leadership and genuine concern and protection for its patrons.

I truly hope you will consider moving forward expeditiously on this commitment. I again would welcome the opportunity to speak with your representatives to discuss this matter at your earliest convenience. I can be reached via email at [ricehughes@aol.com](mailto:ricehughes@aol.com). I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Donna Rice Hughes  
President and CEO  
Enough Is Enough

cc.

Starbucks Board of Directors

Enclosures: Initial correspondence to former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz  
EIE press release and campaign images thanking Starbucks for filtering its WiFi  
News articles from Chicago Tribune and Consumer Affairs