

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Pittsburgh) – The Community Power Movement, in collaboration with other community organizations and residents is hosting a **press conference on Thursday June 21st at 11:00AM** (Press conference to begin at 11:20AM) to announce the filing of an amicus brief and petition in support of the lawsuits filed by media organizations demanding that the City and County release the details of the bid to attract Amazon's 2nd headquarters and that development policies serve the needs of residents. **Location: City-County Building**, 414 Grant St, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Residents are demanding the release of the City, County & State HQ2 bid under Pennsylvania's Right to Know Law. Despite an Office of Public Records decision requiring disclosure, public officials have refused to publicly release their Amazon bid and have appealed to the Courts. Organizations filing an *amicus brief* with the Court of Common Pleas and residents petitioning public officials demand that the City be transparent in its negotiations around the Amazon HQ2. Billions of dollars of public subsidies and taxpayer revenues are at stake, and residents of this area have a vital interest in a robust public debate about Amazon HQ2. As the Amicus brief points out, "Amazon's acceptance of the proposal would likely lead to the displacement of poor, minority and working residents, particularly in the areas surrounding Amazon's proposed new headquarters." It would undoubtedly "increase traffic congestion" and could well lead to more public transit cuts. It could increase existing racial and gender inequality. In short "it would reshape the city and region". This court filing and the petition by hundreds of residents demand a greater public voice in such critical decisions that affect how our city develops.

Pittsburgh and its region is not merely real estate and buildings. Its essence is the people who live here and whose families have built this place. Public officials have an obligation to ensure that policies serve the rights and needs of existing residents. We have to ensure that major governmental decisions do not benefit a privileged elite at the expense of the majority of people who live and work in Pittsburgh. Without learning the terms of the City's bid, we cannot assess the full costs of this deal. Pennsylvania's Right to Know laws were enacted to protect our democracy and prevent government officials from obstructing public debate and research on matters of significant public interest. We are demanding greater transparency and respect for democratic processes in this decision and in all major policy areas affecting the lives and livelihoods of Pittsburgh residents.

Following the press conference, we will deliver our petition to City and County officials demanding the release of the bid and the assurance that all development policies will provide benefits for existing residents.

Press Conference Speakers: Jules Lobel, Community Power Movement; Laura Wiens, Pittsburghers for Public Transit (PPT); Vic Walczak, American Civil Liberties Union-Pennsylvania; Crystal Jennings, Penn Plaza Support and Action; Helen Gerhardt, Commissioner, City of Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations; Emcee: Jackie Smith, Community Power Movement & Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance

Amici List: Community Power Movement, American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, Thomas Merton Center, Pittsburghers for Public Transit, Urbankind Institute, Penn Plaza Support and Action, Hazelwood Initiative, Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance