February 7, 2020

Jeff Bezos
Chief Executive Officer
Amazon.com, Inc.
410 Terry Ave. North
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Bezos:

We write to express our serious concern about the safety of Amazon's employees, particularly after the busy holiday season. Recent investigations into Amazon's safety records found that the injury rate of workers at Amazon facilities is much higher than the injury rate for private sector employers in the U.S. – and even for the warehouse industry generally. Any practice that puts profits before worker safety is unacceptable. We urge you to take immediate steps to protect your employees from workplace injuries. Your employees' lives and well-being depend upon your swift action.

Recent analysis of Amazon's own internal injury records by *The Atlantic, Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting,* and by a coalition of worker advocate organizations found disturbing injury rates at Amazon warehouses. In the article "Ruthless Quotas at Amazon Are Maiming Employees," published November 25, 2019 in *The Atlantic*, workers detail Amazon's strict quota requirements that force employees to fulfill orders so quickly they are either unable to complete tasks safely or must perform so many tasks that they pay the physical consequences for doing so. Workers report going to great lengths to meet their quotas – which you refer to as target performance expectations – because failure to meet it three times leads to an employee's termination. Pressure to meet their quotas is so great that workers report urinating in plastic bottles on the warehouse floor, or are even avoiding restroom breaks altogether. Some employees were even discouraged from evacuating a facility where a noxious gas leak occurred. Perhaps the most emblematic example of the company's seeming disregard for worker safety is the failure to notice a worker fatality for more than two hours at an Indiana facility.

The firsthand accounts included in *The Atlantic* article are part of a larger pattern of Amazon employees suffering workplace injuries. The recently published report "Packaging Pain: Workplace Injuries In Amazon's Empire" documents the extent to which workplace injuries are stunningly widespread throughout Amazon facilities. According to the report, Amazon workers are three times as likely to get injured than employees at other private employers. Moreover, Amazon employees are more than five times as likely to suffer a serious injury (involving days away from work, job restriction or transfer) than employees at other private employers – with almost nine out of ten injured Amazon workers forced to take time off of work or transfer. When such injuries are serious enough to force employees to miss work, they are so severe that Amazon employees miss an average of five and a half weeks of work. Amazon's worker injury numbers are also more than twice as bad in the pre-Christmas crunch period.

These reports make clear that by placing such a priority on speed and quota fulfillment, your company requires employees to risk their safety and health to perform and keep their jobs. The safety of workers should come first. To ensure it does, and consistent with the reports' conclusions, we urge you to immediately take the following action:

- Reduce workers' quotas and speed requirements, schedule frequent rest breaks during high production shifts, and eliminate the policy of terminating workers who do not meet their quotas three times;
- Cease including bathroom breaks as "time off task" and ensure workers are allowed and encouraged to hydrate and use the bathroom as needed;
- If Amazon provides worksite medical care, ensure it is staffed by licensed health care professionals operating within their legal scope of practice;
- Provide immediate referrals to a physician for workers who report to Amazon's on-site medical care that their symptoms are not improving and for workers who request medical care from a physician so they can see the doctor or urgent care provider of their choice and receive adequate medical treatment;
- Conduct a comprehensive ergonomic evaluation of all warehouse tasks involving manual material handling and implement changes to the physical workplace and to work practices that reduce or eliminate employee risk to ergonomic injuries;
- Implement a strong and enforceable company policy that prohibits supervisors and managers from discrimination or retaliation when workers report injuries or safety concerns;
- Ensure workers, who know their jobs and working conditions best, have a guaranteed way to raise safety and health concerns and provide recommendations to correct identified hazards and keep workers apprised in a timely fashion of action taken by management regarding their concerns; and
- Make public Amazon's summary record of serious injuries (OSHA 300 A) on Amazon's website for all of the company's worksites.

Amazon's dismal safety record indicates a greater concern for profits than for your own workers' safety and health. We urge you to overhaul this profit-at-all costs culture at your company and take the immediate steps identified in this letter to ensure Amazon's managers treat your workers fairly and do not require them to risk their own health and safety in the course of doing their jobs.

We request a written response to this letter, including detailed descriptions of the action the company is taking to adopt the policy changes outlined in this letter, by February 21st.

Sincerely,

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Christopher Murphy
United States Senator

Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator