

Board Report on Worker Health and Safety Disparities

RESOLVED: Shareholders urge the Amazon.com (“Amazon”) Board of Directors to issue a report, at reasonable cost and excluding proprietary information, examining whether Amazon’s health and safety practices give rise to any racial and gender disparities in workplace injury rates among its warehouse workers and the impact of any such disparities on the long-term earnings and career advancement potential of female and minority warehouse workers.

Among other things, the report shall include lost time injury rates for all warehouse workers, broken down by race, gender and ethnicity.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT:

As recognized by Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the cost of workplace injuries is borne primarily by injured workers (who, on average, earn 15% less over ten years following an injury), their families, and taxpayer-supported components of the social safety net, with societal costs adding “inequality to injury.”¹

Amazon is the second largest employer in the United States; its health and safety issues have a significant impact on its 1.3 million workers, their households and society. To the extent that more workers of color are affected, Amazon may perpetuate systemic racism.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, “[w]ork injuries and illnesses exact a tremendous toll on society, and COVID-19 has unequally affected many racial and ethnic minority groups by putting them more at risk of getting sick and dying.”² One pre-pandemic study found that non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic workers were more likely to experience work-related disabilities, compared to white workers.³ An older study found that Black workers’ occupational fatality rate was 1.3 to 1.5 times higher.⁴

Amazon has been cited for significantly higher injury rates at its warehouses before and during the pandemic. Since 2017, according to one analysis of government data, Amazon reported a higher rate of serious injury incidents leading to missed work or to light-duty shifts than at other retailers’ warehouses.⁵ Data also show Amazon’s serious injury rates were nearly double those of their peers.⁶ One national health and safety group included Amazon in its 2018 and 2019 “Dirty Dozen” list of most dangerous employers in the United States, citing it in 2020 for dishonorable mention.⁷

Given its racially and ethnically diverse warehouse workforce,⁸ Amazon’s higher illness and injury rates may have a more pronounced impact on workers of color.

Amazon has announced that it is making large investments in safety and health initiatives (although details are lacking) and it already discloses the company’s lost time injury rate to the federal government. It does not, however, publicly disclose such data, which may be material to long-term investors. Also, investors lack transparency into how Amazon analyzes adverse impacts of the company’s health and safety practices on its workers, especially warehouse workers of color.

We urge shareholders to vote FOR this proposal.

¹https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/inequality_michaels_june2015.pdf

²<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>

³[Racial And Ethnic Differences In The Frequency Of Workplace Injuries And Prevalence Of Work-Related Disability | Health Affairs](#)

⁴ <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.88.1.40>

⁵<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/06/01/amazon-osh-injury-rate/>

⁶<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/06/01/amazon-osh-injury-rate/>;

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2021/06/08/amazon-warehouse-injuries-significantly-higher-than-competitors-infographic/?sh=fa002626854b>; <https://thesoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PrimedForPain.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.coshnetwork.org/national-cosh-reports>

⁸<https://www.seattletimes.com/business/amazon/amazons-workforce-split-sharply-along-the-lines-of-race-gender-and-pay-new-data-indicates/>