

Dear Chairman Sanders and Senator Graham,

I come to you in my capacity as President of the Amazon Labor Union to speak humbly on behalf of the 8,300 newly organized Amazon workers in Staten Island, as well as the hundreds of thousands of workers across the country who are in the process of organizing or desire to organize. In the United States, there are those of us who dare to challenge corporate power because we see it as necessary to improve our own lives and the lives of our coworkers and fellow citizens. The notion that people united in democracy will outmatch tyranny is the oldest American ideal. There's a clearly-defined legal process to do this, and workers like us have rights protected by the First Amendment and the National Labor Relations Act. However, despite this, our victory in Staten Island was lauded as newsworthy and inspirational precisely because workers rarely get this far. And, even though we may have won, even though we did everything right, pressuring Amazon to recognize our victory and comply with their legal obligation to meet us at the bargaining table is going to be an even greater struggle.

This is because the repression that Amazon exerts on its workers is the same as the repression it exerts on the legal system. The labor laws in our country are too weak, and Amazon violates them with impunity. We need additional penalties levied against employers who refuse to recognize the rights of their employees. Otherwise, working class people in this country will continue to suffer.

From our Staten Island campaign alone, there are over 40 unfair labor practice charges pending before the NLRB concerning everything from unlawful coercion to retaliation and wrongful termination. The board has already issued numerous complaints against Amazon, having found merit to workers' allegations of illegal union-busting. I, myself, was unlawfully terminated for engaging in protected workplace organizing, as well as my fellow coworkers Gerald Bryson and Daequan Smith. In the case of Gerald Bryson, an Administrative Law Judge has concluded his termination was wrongful and has ordered his reinstatement.

I come to you with the belief that we cannot allow Amazon or any other employer to receive taxpayer money if they engage in illegal union-busting behavior and deny workers' rights. We cannot provide federal contracts to these employers. We cannot allow them to receive taxpayer subsidies from our State and Local governments. In New York State alone, Amazon has been given almost \$400 million in tax abatements through various programs which expressly stipulate the recipient must not violate labor laws and regulations. We are fighting to get this money back.

Moreover, we must increase funding to the National Labor Relations Board, which has become so mired in resource-intensive work that it struggles to carry out its executive function.

Most importantly, we cannot allow employers like Amazon to flaunt federal law by delaying the certification and bargaining processes for years on end. Workers who successfully organize

should serve as a beacon of inspiration to others, not a cautionary tale. Amazon spent tens of millions of dollars to interfere with our organizing efforts and we still won. They must recognize us and come to the table. In the end, our victory must mean something -- for ourselves and for others.

Lastly, I cannot understate the importance of the PRO Act. To organize Amazon, the workers in our union had to make incredible sacrifices. They had to put their livelihoods on the line. Organizing should not be this difficult and it should not be dangerous. The provisions of the PRO act will transform the way that working class people in this country build power. We must pass this bill no matter what.

Thank you for your time,  
Christian Smalls