

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 15, 2020

Loren Sweatt  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Ms. Sweatt:

I am writing to request that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) launch a comprehensive investigation into Amazon's recent dismissal of two employees at their warehouse facility located in Shakopee, Minnesota.

The fired workers were heavily involved in organizing efforts and in the last few weeks, had acted as strong, vocal advocates for increased worker protections and more rigorous cleaning standards in Amazon facilities, given the increased coronavirus infection rates reported among warehouse workers. In fact, the employees in question helped to organize a complaint filed by a group of Shakopee facility workers with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in early April. The complaint outlined the lack of decisive action taken by management, despite employees' consistent requests for additional safety measures and relief during the pandemic, such as reducing the speed at which they must work and greater access to protective gear. The formal complaint came after workers at dozens of Amazon facilities nationwide tested positive for COVID-19. Despite this, the company continued to hire thousands of additional warehouse workers, making it harder to implement appropriate social distancing measures.

It is outrageous that during an unprecedented global health pandemic, an employer would choose to fire workers coming forward to blow the whistle on health and safety risks, rather than fix the conditions that are threatening their dedicated essential workforce and their vital supply chain. Not only is Amazon's action shocking, it is a clear violation of whistleblower protection provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Section 11(c) of this law directly prohibits employers from retaliating against employees for exercising their right to file a safety or health complaint with OSHA, to raise a health and safety concern with their employers or reporting a work-related injury or illness.

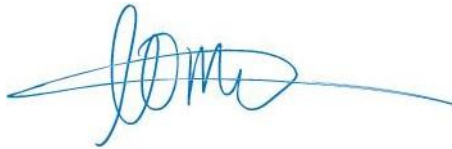
Even prior to the dire global health crisis, these facilities had a proven record of serious health and safety standard violations, and at present, Amazon has not issued an adequate internal pandemic preparedness and response plan. Recent statements made by Amazon do not include

sufficient detail about worker protections and use vague terms such as “often” and “increasing,” instead of providing specific data.

Given the severity of Amazon’s actions against employees in the Shakopee facility and the potential ramifications for essential workers across all industries and states, I request that OSHA launch a thorough and comprehensive investigation into these recent actions, giving particular consideration to possible violations the whistleblower protection provisions established by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. OSHA’s mission is to “ensure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women.” I ask that you act swiftly to ensure that goal is met for Amazon’s essential workforce, who are facing unprecedented dangers as they diligently continue reporting for work during this escalating global health pandemic.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ilhan Omar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress