

Resolved

Shareholders of Amazon.com request that the Board of Directors commission an independent third-party audit on workplace health and safety, evaluating:

- productivity quotas,
- surveillance practices, and
- the effects of these practices on injury rates and turnover.

The audit should be conducted with input from employees, experts in workplace safety and surveillance, and other relevant stakeholders; informed by recent state legislation;¹ and address regulatory inquiry,² and media coverage.³ A report on the audit, prepared at reasonable cost and omitting confidential and proprietary information, should be publicly disclosed on Amazon's website.

Supporting Statement

The recent pandemic has brought increased media and congressional scrutiny to the well-being of Amazon's essential workers.⁴ This scrutiny has extended to workplace conditions, safety, and the high employee turnover rate (recently estimated at 150%).⁵ While Amazon plans to incur several billion dollars of additional costs in response to its labor shortage, practices that contribute to high turnover continue: productivity quotas and worker surveillance that result in above-average injury rates.⁶ Numerous studies have found similar trends at Amazon, including:

- In 2020 the serious injury rate at Amazon warehouses was nearly 80% higher than the warehouse industry average.⁷
- Injuries at Amazon facilities were more severe than those at other warehouses.⁸
- A recent case study found the equivalent of 1 in 9 workers at Amazon facilities was injured each year.⁹
- Injury rates at Amazon warehouses increased during peak season.¹⁰

¹ <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/08/1034776936/amazon-warehouse-workers-speed-quotas-california-bill>; <https://inthesetimes.com/article/at-will-just-cause-employment-union-labor-illinois>; <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/10/07/opinion/massachusetts-has-chance-clean-up-our-national-privacy-disaster/>

² <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/because-of-injury-claims-state-wants-amazons-automated-warehouses-to-pay-higher-workers-comp-premiums-than-meatpacking-or-logging-operations/>

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/06/01/amazon-osa-injury-rate/>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/podcasts/the-daily/amazon-pandemic-labor-shortage.html>

⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/15/us/amazon-workers.html>

⁶ <https://ir.aboutamazon.com/news-release/news-release-details/2021/Amazon.com-Announces-Third-Quarter-Results/default.aspx>

⁷ <https://thesoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PrimedForPain.pdf>

⁸ <https://thesoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PrimedForPain.pdf>

⁹ <https://s27147.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/Report-Injuries-Dead-End-Jobs-and-Racial-Inequity-in-Amazons-Minnesota-Operations-.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://revealnews.org/article/how-amazon-hid-its-safety-crisis>

- Amazon facilities with greater automated technology had above-average injury rates.¹¹
- Surveyed Amazon workers cited constant surveillance as a cause of stress, anxiety, and depression.¹²
- Amazon temporarily suspended some productivity metrics in 2020, in response to the pandemic. That year saw the first decline in Amazon’s injury rate in years.¹³

Workers and labor unions cite the above as motivating factors for organizing efforts at Amazon, and these concerns have brought significant scrutiny upon the company, including:¹⁴

- 15 U.S. Senators signed a letter calling on Amazon to address workplace health and safety issues linked to productivity rates.¹⁵
- Public health organizations and over 200 public health practitioners called on Amazon to suspend productivity quotas and workplace surveillance.¹⁶
- Washington state raised Amazon’s worker compensation premium rates by 15% and proposed placing fulfillment centers in their own risk class.¹⁷
- California passed a state bill regulating warehouse performance metrics.¹⁸

As Amazon strives to be “the Earth’s Safest Place to Work,”¹⁹ a review is needed of the practices that have made the company a leader in workplace injuries and a target for criticism and regulation. With surveillance and productivity quotas linked to high injury rates, we urge Amazon to commission an independent audit of these practices to understand their impact on the company’s employees and operations, and inform changes in practices that mitigate and prevent future harm.

¹¹ <https://thesoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PrimedForPain.pdf>

¹² <https://humanimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Public-Health-Crisis-Hidden-In-Amazon-Warehouses-HIP-WWRC-01-21.pdf>

¹³ <https://thesoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PrimedForPain.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurendebter/2021/04/01/how-alabama-union-fight-could-change-amazon/>

¹⁵ <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/6772867/AmazonWorkerSafetyLetterFeb72020.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://humanimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Public-Health-Letter-to-Amazon-11-17-21.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/because-of-injury-claims-state-wants-amazons-automated-warehouses-to-pay-higher-workers-comp-premiums-than-meatpacking-or-logging-operations/>

¹⁸ <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2021-09-08/california-bill-ab701-passes-senate-warehouse-work-metrics-algorithms-regulation>

¹⁹ https://s2.q4cdn.com/299287126/files/doc_financials/2021/ar/Amazon-2020-Annual-Report.pdf