

## **Worker Briefing #1 1.24.2022 Briefing Briefing - AS PREPARED REMARKS**

### **Isaiah Thomas (Ship Dock, 20)**

Good evening, I'm Isaiah Thomas. I work in the ship dock at Amazon BHM1, and I've been there for a year and 3 months now. I want to thank my fellow organizing Committee members Kristina Bell and Reyn McGuire for joining me on tonight's call and the media for joining us. You'll be hearing from many of us on the Committee over the next few weeks as we begin to receive and cast our ballots for the union.

As you're all aware this Fall, the NLRB found that Amazon violated our election process last year and it needs to be reheld. In addition to our election, workers across the country were able to win clarity from the labor board about union organizing laws in facilities like ours in a national settlement agreement. Despite this agreement, I can sadly report that we already believe Amazon to be in violation of it's national settlement agreement.

On Friday, I was issued a letter by Amazon Management charging that I violated the company's solicitation policy. I know my rights, and I know I was well within the bounds of the settlement agreement and national labor law to discuss the union with my co-workers on break time. This evening we filed Unfair Labor Practice charges on the letter Amazon issued, and their practice of surveilling my breaktime conversations with coworkers. Surveillance and letters like this, and being called out by management in front of my coworkers causes a chilling effect. It is not just problematic, but is against the law. We hope these charges will be reviewed swiftly and that a fair remedy is issued.

But I don't want to dwell on negativity. This was an extremely exciting week for all of us on the Organizing Committee at BHM1. We held several t-shirt solidarity days in the facility, which Kristina Bell will be talking about shortly. And Reyn, who was not part of the first election has been driving up support for the union among new workers and I know she's excited to talk about what this union drive means for all of us.

I also have an action to talk about, but let me turn it over to Kristina...

### **[Kristina on T-shirt Days]**

#### **Kristina Bell (Stow, Age)**

To show our solidarity, we've been wearing our union shirts and buttons at work. We've passed out hundreds and many of us are showing our support for building our union by wearing them and showing Amazon that we are not afraid. We feel solidarity in numbers when we look across our work stations and see a sea of red. And it's growing every week, more and more of our coworkers are coming up to us to join and be in solidarity as we try to improve our working conditions through unionizing. It's been inspiring to see everyone ready to get our shot at another election. These solidarity days are going to be continuing throughout the election and we're excited to see how quickly our movement continues to grow. We know our rights are protected under the law and we have the freedom to discuss our union at work, and we will be exercising that right.

### **Isaiah Thomas (Ship Dock, 20)**

Thank you, Kristina, my department in the ship dock also took action this week gathering the majority of our outbound day shift crew on a petition calling for higher pay, a fair break system, better communication, and dignity and respect at work. The union is not some third party, but it's us coming together to demand change. We are the union and we are demanding that things change now!

Workers like Reyn who weren't here for the first union election also are concerned about these same issues and I want to turn it over to her to talk about why we're building this union at BHM1, Reyn?

**[Reyn on New Worker Organizing]**

**Reyn McGuire (Picker, Age )**

My name is Reyn McGuire. I'm a picker at Amazon BHM1, and I am voting yes for the union, because I have a voice, and it will be heard.

I know how hard we all work. We're always rushing to get to our station. We're not getting the breaks that we deserve so that we can even eat a decent meal on our break. It can be an uncomfortable place for us to work. We're working really hard for this company that has no problem selling and marketing to the world that they care so much about their customers, but what about us?

Where's the love for us? We know they love their money, but what about the people who make them their money? This place wouldn't run without us. Coming together to form our union is important. I know I'm tired. I know I want to have time to spend with my kids and I don't have that time right now. That is one of the many reasons that I'm voting union yes!

When I talk to newer workers at the facility like me, they know we need to fight for change, that kind of response after working somewhere for just a few months should tell you what it's been like for us.

**Isaiah Thomas (Ship Dock, 20)**

Thank you, Reyn, I'm voting union yes again because in unionizing, we can demand better treatment and respect at work and I know Kristina is too, Kristina?

**[Kristina on Voting Union YES!]**

**Kristina Bell (Stow, Age)**

Amazon said they cared about our well-being last time we were unionizing, but the minute the union election was over, they went back to acting the same way with the same unbelievable quotas and the time off task. They've proven that they care more about quotas than the people like us working here. They've continued to treat us like robots, not humans.

By working together and forming our union, we can finally get the respect and dignity we deserve. We just have to keep fighting. Voting yes for our union is the best way we can achieve change inside the building. That is why I'm voting union yes! We know Amazon destroyed our right to a free and fair election and we will keep fighting to have our voices heard.

**Isaiah Thomas (Ship Dock, 20)**

Thank you, Kristina.

We appreciate the reporters who have joined us this evening and I'd like to turn it over to Chelsea Connor to help us moderate questions from you now, Chelsea?

**Chelsea Connor (RWDSU Communications)**

Good evening again everyone, thank you to the organizing committee for asking me to support their briefing tonight. Members of the media if you have on-topic questions we'd ask that you use the Q&A function in Zoom to enter your questions and I will call on you in the order they are received and unmute you to ask our spokespeople your question. I'll give it a minute for questions to start populating. Bear with us on technology delays, ok, first up we have XXXXX, XXXXX you've been unmuted please ask your question.

**Isaiah responsive ONLY to worker death if asked:**

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our coworker and the many other co-workers that have passed at BHM1 since it opened. None of us should ever worry about if we'll go home to our family at night.

Amazon can and must change how it operates which leads to a work environment where co-workers pass out from exhaustion. There's no reason we should feel like we're putting ourselves at risk just going to work. No person's life is worth that kind of risk. But more importantly, to not even recognize our coworker's death is outrageous, and he will forever remain in our hearts and minds as we continue to work right where he died.

ULPs

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