



New York State Conference of Teamsters

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Memorandum In Support of the Warehouse Worker Protection Act

S8922 (Ramos) / A10020 (Joyner)

May 9, 2022

Dear Members of the New York State Legislature,

The New York State Conference of Teamsters, consisting of Joint Councils 16, 18, and 46 and representing over 100,000 workers in New York, strongly supports the Warehouse Worker Protection Act (S8922/A10020) to defend the safety of workers in the e-commerce and warehouse industries. We urge you to pass the legislation this session and set a national standard for protecting workers in this growing industry.

Warehouse workers are essential workers who helped New Yorkers quarantine and survive the pandemic, but their own health is often an afterthought. They are forced to choose between their safety and meeting ever increasing production quotas. Amazon has revolutionized this industry for the worse, developing sophisticated technology and software that push workers to the limit. Worker safety regulations have not kept pace with increasing worker exploitation.

The Warehouse Worker Protection Act would update New York law to protect workers from injuries and unfair quotas through the following reforms:

- **Transparent quotas:** The legislation would protect workers from discipline or termination based on unfair quotas that do not allow them to follow health and safety regulations or to take legally protected breaks. It would also require that employers provide workers with documents related to the quotas they are being held to.
- **Injury reduction plans:** The bill will create an injury reduction plan at all large warehouses to protect workers from injuries that result from repetitive movements and unsafe practices. Employers will work with a professional ergonomist to develop a plan for their warehouse, in consultation with workers.
- **Better enforcement:** The legislation empowers the New York State Department of Labor to more effectively enforce these worker safety regulations by modeling the enforcement process currently used for public sector workplaces.

Amazon's growth in New York is endangering workers. Amazon's first facility in New York opened in 2014. Just eight years later, there are 78 facilities in the state. The rate of serious injuries at Amazon warehouse was 6 incidents per 100 full time employees, fifty percent higher than New York's warehouse industry overall. A recent report by the Strategic Organizing Center found that the injury rate at Amazon facilities increased by 20% between 2020 and 2021.

The Teamsters Union supported similar legislation on quotas that was passed in California last year. Other states are also advancing bills based on the California law. New York can strengthen this movement by passing this best-in-the-nation bill this session.

With more New Yorkers turning to e-commerce for deliveries and Amazon becoming a dominant employer in many communities, warehouse workers need the support of our legislators. The New York State Conference of Teamsters urges you to swiftly pass this legislation and protect warehouse workers in New York.

Sincerely,

Thomas Gesualdi
President
Teamsters Joint Council 16

John Bulgaro
President
Teamsters Joint Council 18

George Harrigan
President
Teamsters Joint Council 46