

Comptroller Stringer, NYC Funds and APG Call on Amazon to Publicly Disclose Worker Health and Safety Protections Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

Shareowner proposal calls on key independent Board Committee to fulfill its responsibility to oversee, and release details on, Amazon management's efforts to protect workers during the COVID-19 pandemic

Proposal, which follows the Committee's failure to respond to a similar request from the major shareholders last May, will be subject to a shareholder vote at Amazon's 2021 annual meeting if Amazon's independent directors again fail to respond.

New data shows Amazon may have understated the impact of its practices on worker health and safety, some warehouses were COVID-19 hotspots, and the front-line employee turnover rate was double the industry average.

(New York, NY) – Today, New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, on behalf of the New York City Employees' Retirement System, Teachers Retirement System of the City of New York and New York City Board of Education Retirement System (the "Systems"), and the Dutch pension asset manager APG announced a new shareholder proposal calling on the Leadership Development and Compensation Committee ("Committee") of the Amazon Board of Directors to release a public report on the company's efforts to protect workers' health and safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal follows a concerning report from the Center for Investigative Reporting in 2020 that found some Amazon warehouses were COVID-19 hotspots and the turnover rate for frontline employees being double the industry average. These issues have arisen amid a year in which consumers have increasingly relied upon online orders and convenient delivery options for their day-to-day needs – exacerbating questions about the long-term sustainability of a business model that is high speed and high stress for its employees and delivery personnel at the expense of their health and safety.

"There is a massive disconnect between what Amazon management says its doing to keep workers safe and what those workers are reporting. If Amazon is going to invest in worker health and safety measures, they need to demonstrate with hard data that those measures keeping workers healthy and safe," said **New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer**. "With the rapid growth of online retail, companies like Amazon must strengthen their workforce practices to protect their workers and avoid any potential legal, regulatory and reputational risks. Shareholders have a right to transparency concerning Amazon's business practices, especially how the company protects its workforce from COVID-19. Amazon's workers and shareholders deserve an independent, scientifically-driven approach that serves as a model for the entire e-commerce and retail industries."

"We welcome Amazon's disclosure of infection rates as a step toward increased transparency. Though it can be seen as a signal of their commitment to follow through on planned COVID response initiatives, what really matters is the impact. As a long-term, responsible investor in

Amazon, APG wants to understand how effective these billion-dollar initiatives have been. Is it working? Are its employees actually safe?” said **APG’s Anna Pot, Head of Responsible Investments Americas**. “By providing meaningful insight into the outcomes of their efforts to stop the spread of COVID, Amazon could demonstrate responsible business practices and set the standard for other companies. We want them to be accountable for doing their part to protect their workers and the communities they serve.”

Even before the pandemic, long-term investors expressed concerns about the sustainability of Amazon’s business model, which emphasized productivity, notwithstanding reports about its negative effects on worker health and safety. A 2019 report by the Center for Investigative Reporting analyzed Amazon’s OSHA reporting from 22 fulfillment centers and found extremely high injury rates - more than twice the national warehouse rate. In addition, research in the New England Journal of Medicine indicated that COVID-19 can remain on cardboard for up to 24 hours, thus raising questions about the risks if a sick driver were to deliver packages to multiple residences.

In October 2020, Amazon did ultimately acknowledge that 19,816 U.S. employees had tested positive, but argued that this rate was below rates in many states. The report provided limited insight into the effectiveness of Amazon’s COVID response. Independent scientists criticized it for not disclosing overall trends and for comparing infection rates for workers to the general population, which has proportionately more vulnerable and unemployed individuals. The report also failed to identify hotspots, trends by job or facility category, or to discuss rates for delivery driver contractors.

The New York City Pension Funds and APG have \$6.3 billion invested in Amazon on a combined basis. Read the proposal [here](#).

In addition to Comptroller Stringer, the participating New York City Retirement Systems’ trustees are:

New York City Employees’ Retirement System (NYCERS): Mayor Bill de Blasio’s Representative, John Adler (Chair); New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams; Borough Presidents: Gale Brewer (Manhattan), Donovan Richards (Queens), Eric Adams (Brooklyn), James Oddo (Staten Island), and Ruben Diaz, Jr. (Bronx); Henry Garrido, Executive Director, District Council 37, AFSCME; Tony Utano, President Transport Workers Union Local 100; Gregory Floyd, President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 237.

Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS): Mayor Bill de Blasio’s Appointee, John Adler; Chancellor’s Representative, Lindsey Oates, New York City Department of Education; Natalie Green Giles; and Debra Penny (Chair), Thomas Brown and David Kazansky, all of the United Federation of Teachers.

Board of Education Retirement System (BERS): Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza; Mayoral: Isaac Carmignami, Natalie Green Giles, Eric C. Henry Vanessa Leung, Gary Linnen, Lori Podvesker, Shannon Waite, Michael Kraft (Manhattan BP), Debrorah Dillingham (Queens BP), April Chapman (Brooklyn BP), Geneal Chacon (Bronx BP) and Peter Calandrella (Staten Island BP); Thomas C. Sheppard, Kathy Park Price, Natalie Green Giles, Russell Buckley, Chris Attianese, Shaun D. Francois; and employee members John Maderich of the IUOE Local 891 and Donald Nesbit of District Council 37, Local 372.

About APG

APG is the largest pension provider in the Netherlands; its approximately 3,000 employees provide executive consultancy, asset management, pension administration, pension communication and employer services. APG performs these services on behalf of (pension) funds and employers in the sectors of education, government, construction, cleaning and window cleaning, housing associations, energy and utility companies, sheltered employment organizations, and medical specialists. APG manages approximately €564 billion (December 2020) in pension assets for the pension funds in these sectors. APG works for approximately 22,000 employers, providing the pension for one in five families in the Netherlands (about 4.7 million participants). APG has offices in Heerlen, Amsterdam, Brussels, New York, Hong Kong, Beijing, and Shanghai. More information: www.apg.nl/en