

Janitors Who Work at Genentech Demand Protections for Essential Workers as the COVID Pandemic Worsens

Janitors on the front line of the health crisis, keeping public spaces clean and disinfected, take to the streets in "Essential Worker Caravan" to demand change

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 26, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As Congress continues to deliberate over the Coronavirus legislative package, and essential workers continue to die at a high rate, union janitors are launching Essential Worker Caravans to demand a more "worker-centered" response to COVID-19, including layoff protections, essential pay, and personal protective equipment, and to demand that employers start prioritizing lives and safety over profits. Hundreds of janitors will take to the streets in the Bay Area to bring attention to this life-and-death situation.

The caravan comes as the rate of positive tests for the virus among essential workers continues to rise. According to the LA Times, California is currently averaging 8,155 new cases per day with 137 deaths. Essential workers are literally risking their lives and the lives of their families to go to work and keep our economy running, and many of them are not getting the protection that they need to stay safe. Employers are putting profits ahead of the safety of essential workers, and essential workers are demanding a change.

In the Bay Area, union janitors are calling on Silicon Valley to stand by essential workers and not abandon them with no protections. Genentech and many other Silicon Valley companies have made considerable profits during the pandemic. In fact, the price of Roche Holdings stock, Genentech's parent company, is higher than it was in mid-March when the pandemic began.

While some companies, like Google, are standing by their contracted service workers and providing hazard pay, contracted workers at Genentech are being laid off. The workers that can least afford to be without work are being let go with no safety net. This is unacceptable. It is critical that corporations understand their role as corporate citizens during this recovery and not add to the pending homeless crisis.

Employers and the federal government need to stand with the low-wage essential workers that are the front line of the pandemic, keeping public spaces clean and disinfected. These workers are risking their lives to keep our economy moving and they deserve to be compensated and protected from layoff.

WHAT: ESSENTIAL WORKER CARAVAN

WHO: Janitors, security officers, airport workers, and community allies

VISUAL: Caravan made of 30 vehicles, each decorated with slogans, banners, and balloons demanding that the government and employers take action to support essential workers. The caravan will be part recognition of essential workers, and part protest to turn public gratitude into much needed material support.

WHEN: Thursday, August 27th @2pm

WHERE: 35 W Orange Ave, South San Francisco, CA 94080

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SEIU United Service Workers West represents more than 45,000 janitors, security officers, airport service workers, and other property service workers across California.

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