

UFCW will fight Amazon's cashier-less supermarkets

By Mark Gruenberg
Press Associates Inc.

SEATTLE—Amazon's first cashier-less supermarket, which opened in Seattle in mid-February, represents "a clear and present danger" to workers' jobs and to the low-income shoppers it serves, says United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) international President Marc Perrone.

To make matters worse, the retail giant is funding the store while paying zero in federal income taxes, saving \$800 million, which it can then plow into similar worker-less enterprises.

Perrone vowed that his union, which represents tens of thousands of grocery and other retail workers, would do all in its power to combat the cashier-less model, which he said could spread beyond grocery stores.

And such a spread would only enrich Amazon and its founder and prime shareholder, Jeff Bezos, one of the three richest peo-

ple in the United States, Perrone said.

Quoting from a report by CNBC, the Food and Commercial Workers union said "Amazon is continuing its ruthless strategy to take over America's \$800 billion grocery industry."

The takeover drive, UFCW said, started with its purchase of Whole Foods for \$13.7 billion and now has taken the next step to establishing the cashier-less store.

The store "uses the same technology from Amazon Go stores that faced a national backlash from customers and lawmakers who say it discriminates against low-income shoppers and threatens good jobs," the union added. The Amazon Go stores also have not met the firm's financial predictions. And Whole Foods suffered a sales slow down in the last three months of 2019.

"Amazon represents a clear and present danger to millions of

good jobs," Perrone said. "The brutal truth is that Amazon is focused on one thing — eliminating as many jobs as possible to enrich one multi-billionaire, Bezos."

Despite Amazon Go's financial ills, Perrone said Bezos is determined to pursue a ruthless strategy that is designed to destroy millions of grocery worker jobs.

"At a time when millions of Americans are already struggling, when most Americans are one paycheck away from disaster, what does it say that Bezos wants to create stores that serve food and groceries and eliminate the jobs real people need?" he asked.

Perrone vowed UFCW would make Amazon's business practices, which also include allegedly mistreating its warehouse workers, an issue on the 2020 campaign trail, for both parties.



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