



UNION ORGANIZING

Even the coronavirus can't stop union organizing

Immigrant rights group Causa recognizes union immediately. Casa of Oregon to think about it.

By Don McIntosh

If there's a script workers are following in the surge of recent union organizing, Act 1 ends with a bit of theatrics known as the "march on the boss." That's when—after quietly gathering support and signatures from a majority of co-workers—the worker-led union organizing committee parades into the boss's office, announces they've formed a union, and asks the boss to show respect for their rights by voluntarily recognizing the union. In the smart phone era, the march on the boss has become a genre of viral video.

So what happens when the coronavirus epidemic makes marching as a group — and crowding into the corner office — a bad idea?

Communications Workers of America Local 7901 came up with an answer: Make a video of the union announcement, and email it to the boss along with a letter asking for recognition.

"We didn't stop organizing when a pandemic happened. We

just adjusted, like organizers do," said Local 7901 president A.J. Mendoza.

On March 17, workers at the Oregon immigrant rights group Causa did that, sending it to the group's executive director and board of directors. It wasn't a hard sell: Causa rents office space from the Oregon AFL-CIO, and the state labor federation's political director Jess Giannettino Villatoro is a member of the group's board. Less than

20 minutes after the workers sent their email, Causa agreed to voluntarily recognize their choice to join Local 7901. It will become official after professional me-

diator Bob Nightingale confirms that the union has support of a majority of Causa's 10 workers.

Then March 18, workers at CASA of Oregon did the same. CASA of Oregon is a non-profit that develops affordable housing for rural residents and farmworkers. In their email to the group's executive director and board of directors, they say the majority of the group's 18 workers want the union, and ask for voluntary recognition by noon on March 24. Thus far, there's been no response.

"We didn't stop organizing when a pandemic happened. We just adjusted, like organizers do."

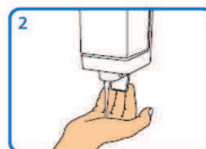
— CWA Local 7901 President A.J. Mendoza

Hand-washing, union style

To prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommends washing your hands for at least 20 seconds. One way to time that out is to sing the opening verse and chorus to the union anthem Solidarity Forever. Sung to the same tune as the Battle Hymn of the Republic ("Glory, Glory, Hallelujah"), here the lyrics are combined with visuals showing thorough hand washing technique.



When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run



There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun;



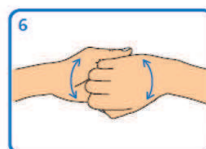
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one



But the union makes us strong



Solidarity forever



Solidarity forever



Solidarity forever



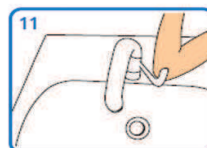
For the union makes us strong



Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite



Who would lash us into serfdom and would crush us with his might?



Is there anything left to us but to organize and fight?



For the union makes us strong



It is we who plowed the prairies; built the cities where they trade;

MESOTHELIOMA LUNG CANCER LARYNGEAL CANCER

We are a local Oregon Law firm helping people with asbestos related cancer claims.

NMR

**NELSON
MacNEIL
RAYFIELD**

TRIAL ATTORNEYS PC

**Call us for a FREE INVESTIGATION
into your eligibility for compensation.**

1-877-928-9147 • www.NelsonMacNeil.com