UE Urges Workers to Demand All But Truly Non-Essential Workplaces Shut Down

*Union encourages workers to use provisions in the CARES Act to provide income for their families while aggressive public-health measures are taken.*

For more information contact: Jonathan Kissam, UE Communications Director
(802) 343 1745 | jkissam@ueunion.org

In a statement released this morning, UE’s national officers said it is time for workers to “demand that all but the truly essential workplaces close and that safety measures be greatly stepped up at those locations that need to stay open.” They noted further that “there are aspects of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which is now law, that will make it economically feasible for workers to demand that their non-essential workplaces be closed.”

The statement, titled “Workers’ Lives vs. Corporate Profits,” points out that “the rapidly growing COVID-19 pandemic brings into sharp relief how bosses put their own profits ahead of workers’ lives, something workers have known for generations.”

The union denounced employers and politicians who prioritize profits over workers’ lives:

> Too many companies are continuing to operate their facilities, either falsely claiming they are essential or just outright ignoring the obvious public health need to stop business as usual. And too many of the workplaces that are actually essential are failing to take the steps needed to protect the health of both their workforce and their customers. Even more shockingly, some prominent government and business leaders are openly pushing to prematurely end the workplace shutdowns that are in place, some openly saying that they are willing to see people die in order to get back to business as they know it, in other words the business of making profits.

UE General President Carl Rosen is available for interviews (please contact UE Communications Director Jonathan Kissam at 802-343-1745 to schedule). The full statement is available at [https://www.ueunion.org/ue-news/2020/workers-lives-vs-corporate-profits](https://www.ueunion.org/ue-news/2020/workers-lives-vs-corporate-profits)