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UFCW LOCAL 7 OF COLORADO: PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER WON'T PROTECT THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IF IT DOESN'T PROTECT WORKERS

Colorado's Largest Private Sector Union President Reacts to President Trump's Pending Executive Order to Invoke the Defense Protection Act to Keep Meat Processing Plants Open While Essential Workers May Continue to Get Sick or Die

DENVER – Kim Cordova, President of [UFCW Local 7](#), which represents 3,000 workers at the JBS meat processing plant in Greeley, Colorado, issued the following statement:

“The food supply is insecure because of the ineptitude of the meat processing companies like JBS, and the failure of federal, state and local governments, to effectively mandate safety measures and enforceable laws that provide PPE for a safe working environment from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, in Colorado and beyond, thousands of workers may be infected with COVID-19 and in Greeley, four of our members have died.

The government should be at war against the coronavirus, not American workers. The best way to protect the food supply chain is to protect the workers. Our members are critical to keeping the food supply chains functioning.

The President's executive order will only ensure that more workers get sick, jeopardizing lives, family's income, communities, and of course, the country's food supply chain. Many of our workers came here to work hard and live the American dream. This order turns those dreams into nightmares. This is not

just a labor issue, but a human rights issue. This is not the Middle ages, and workers are not serfs—toiling at the whim of the management lords of the manor. Employers are entitled to make a fair profit, but not at the possible expense of their employees' lives, liberty and safety.

The Union denounces the proposed federal order as it relieves companies of any type of liability should a worker get sick or die. This policy will ensure that meat processing companies will not be incentivized to provide a safe workplace since there is no accountability, and our members will continue to be in harm's way on the job.

There are common sense measures that can keep our food supply chains strong, and our workers healthy and safe, such as mandatory testing and PPE for all workers, paid sick leave, full healthcare coverage, staggered shifts, and implementing social distancing on the production line. Mandatory safety measures and enforceable laws for essential workers-- America's heroes—, not administrative pablum, are critical to keep the food supply chains flowing and people working, which should be our ultimate shared goal.”

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[Local 7](#), the largest Union in Colorado is affiliated with United Food and Commercial Workers International Union which represents over 1.3 million workers in the United States and Canada, and is one of the largest private sector Unions in North America. UFCW members work in a wide range of industries, including retail food, food processing, agriculture, retail sales, and health care.