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Join Me in Fearlessness

Colleagues, friends, I call on you today to discuss a pressing issue in this company. There has been a willful neglect of those who have just joined this company and those who have stayed loyal for years. We have been plagued with inconsistency and disrespect from the first day we have been here. I understand that everyone's experience is different. I can also understand that some people don't have the same issues as others regarding this. But those who have been here long enough, long enough to see the change that this company took. Going from a prestigious and well-known institution, to one that takes shortcuts and cheats their employees. From not approving PTO put in months before the time and then not saying anything, to the loads of people getting paid minimum wage while doing the jobs of two or three people. And what do we get from all our labor? The company gets paid \$35-\$45 and doesn't even have the respect to cough up half of that. Not to mention those of us who are working over 40 hours a week and not seeing our overtime reflected in our checks because payroll "forgot". People we are in dire need of unionization.

Let's talk about our money people, the thing most of us do this for. For some of us, security was not our first career choice, it certainly wasn't mine. The thing about this job is that

you build so many unexpected relationships. For most of us, we are the only ones at our sites that directly interact with every department on one level or another. This allows us to form more connections with people and develop long lasting relationships. A lot of us can fake ourselves out the funk, but I'll tell you what, it's damn hard to do that on \$15 an hour in New York City. The other day I went ahead and attempted to do some research. Mainly because I was upset with my pay but also out of curiosity. According to NYU News "To afford the average one-bedroom apartment, the minimum wage must be \$19.56 an hour. In New York State, one needs to earn \$32.53 an hour — or work 110 hours a week at the state's minimum wage — to afford the average two-bedroom apartment." (*Bungle, S. (2021, March 15). \$15 an hour is not enough, especially in New York. Washington Square News. <https://nyunews.com/2021/03/15/15-an-hour-is-not-enough-especially-in-new-york/>*). By those numbers, you would only have eight hours to sleep and work 16 hours every single day. Is that the kind of life we want to live?

We are not robots; we are not slaves or automatons that feel nothing. We are living, breathing people that deserve more than to just get by. A study recorded in the US National Library of Medicine, concluded that working hours of 55 or more was harmful and can cause people to drink or smoke more than the average person. "Table 1 presents the association between working hours and covariates among the participants at baseline. Employees working long hours (>55/week) were more often men, married or cohabiting, were in higher occupational grades, more likely to drink over the recommended limits and less often current smokers. Employees working 41 to 55 hours were slightly younger than the other two groups." (*Long Working Hours and Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression: A 5-Year Follow-up of the Whitehall II Study.* " National Center for Biotechnology Information, 18 Feb. 2011,

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3095591) We have a right to live comfortably in this city without having to work ourselves to death for it.

Friends, did you know that our profession is still considered unskilled? We are categorized as unskilled workers, yet they need us to protect them. To make sure no one trespasses on their property, to see that those inside these buildings are always safe and secure. Unskilled? I'll tell you what General Manager of hotel who-gives-a-hell, how about you watch these cameras, log out these keys and patrol the building all at the same time. Show me how unskilled we are then. How can one need me and then not want to pay me? My worth is not based off some number on a page. I am worth what your safety is worth and if that's \$15 every hour then that's what you'll get.

Truth is I have never understood why we are unskilled. We are a 24-hour service, we are expected to be always on-call and if someone doesn't show we are often expected to stay behind and pick up a shift. FSD's know about this more than anyone, them leaving before a replacement shows can have serious legal repercussions. We need protection, and if we can't get it from our company then we must create it on our own. We deserve to have lives outside of work and for those lives not to be riddled with fatigue from work. Did you know that Forbes categorizes us at the top of the list for unhappiest jobs? "Heading the list of the unhappiest jobs is security officer, with an index score of 3.51 out of 5." (Smith, Jacquelyn. "The Unhappiest Jobs In America." *Forbes*, 10 July 2012, www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2012/03/27/the-unhappiest-jobs-in-america/?sh=723482dd6d18.)

I have never been a leader, nor do I aspire to be one. I do not wish to lead anyone into a bloody, fruitless war and I do not want to destroy lives because of my views. I do not ask that you stand behind me or for me. I ask you to stand with me, to stand in solidarity for things we

deserve. For those of you that have families, those who want to invest their own futures, the ones in school still like me, those who may not be here for long but would like to have a positive time and experience change. Don't do this for me but for yourselves. To be the change you want to see in the place that you spend a good portion of your time in. To be happy at work and go home knowing that you mad a change that could have a lasting effect on this company. Please my friends, join me in fearlessness.