

INTERNATIONAL
LONGSHORE &
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AFL-CIO



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Sisters and Brothers,

On behalf of 40,000 members in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), I want to thank you for organizing your "Occupy Wall Street" protest in New York City which is inspiring millions of Americans.

Most of us are tired of seeing a handful of the richest corporations and executives behave as though they're entitled to live like kings at everyone's expense:

They aren't paying their fair share of taxes, so schools are cutting back and colleges are raising fees – leaving students with obscene debts. It's time for the millionaires – the richest 1% - to start paying their fair share so we can support education and other vital services.

They're destroying our democracy and right to a voice in the workplace. By making it almost impossible for workers to form unions and negotiate fair agreements, corporate America is dragging down the living standards for all working families.

They're threatening to destroy Social Security and Medicare for future generations. We can't allow corporations to privatize and profit from these programs. Instead, we should close the loopholes so corporations and the rich start paying the same contributions as everyone else.

Your decision to bring these and other issues to corporate America's doorstep is courageous – and involves some risks. We weren't surprised that some of you have faced beatings and pepper spray from overzealous police. Your crusade to shine a light on the corruption and injustice that's infecting Wall Street is bound to ruffle some feathers. We've experienced some similar rough treatment in Longview, Washington, where ILWU families are also taking a stand against corporate greed. Our fight there is against EGT, a multi-national corporation that took taxpayer subsidies to build a grain export terminal – then betrayed workers and the community.

Like you, ILWU members in Longview have been arrested, beaten and pepper sprayed. We know that justice won't be won by asking greedy employers for permission or waiting for politicians to pass laws. That's why we hope that you'll stand your ground on Wall Street while we do the same in Longview – because *An Injury To One Is An Injury To All!*

In solidarity

Robert McEllrath
International President