

To the Executive Chairman of Amazon Jeff Bezos:

Hello,

My name is Tang Mingfang, and I am from Yongzhou City in Hunan Province, China. I was a material control engineer at Foxconn Hengyang, where I worked on the mass production and quality control for the Amazon Kindle and Echo Smart Speakers and Displays. Due to Hengyang Foxconn's cost cutting measures, its employees' interests and rights were not protected, and Chinese laws were violated. The factory illegally employed student workers and dispatch workers from employment agencies, and Hengyang Foxconn refused to acknowledge the fact that it did not protect employees' basic wellbeing or respect their demands. After gathering my courage, I risked my safety and reported the violations to China Labor Watch, founded by Li Qiang, to whom I provided key evidence for the above claims, including several photos that were not encrypted by Foxconn. I believe you have viewed these photos and you are aware of the issues at Foxconn. The reason why I reported these abuses was to fulfill my duty to defend social justice and out of empathy for the battered student workers; my intentions were never to seek profit or harm the company. After the China Labor Watch report was published in August 2019, with the help from you and Amazon, Hengyang Foxconn immediately rectified the above-mentioned violations, and Hon Hai Group issued a public statement claiming it had already disciplined those responsible for the malpractice. But Foxconn did not promote legal practices in order to fundamentally solve the problem; rather Foxconn is now trying to punish me, the "whistleblower", to fundamentally solve *their* problem: me publicly exposing their malpractice.

After China Labor Watch and The Guardian initially reported Hengyang Foxconn labor law violations in March 2018, Amazon took actions right away, including requiring the Hengyang plant to develop an error correction plan and routine inspections and ensuring Foxconn can make the necessary changes. Foxconn also issued a statement that they would correct the found violations. As an employee of Foxconn in Hengyang at that time, and a witness of this incident, I clearly know Amazon's strict requirements for its suppliers regarding corporate social responsibility and commitment to employee welfare, as well as Amazon's firm intolerance of such illegal employment practices by Foxconn. However, the real situation I witnessed was that although Hengyang Foxconn issued a public statement promising to improve, in actuality, they not only did *not* follow Amazon's requirements to improve, but the labor environment also

worsened in 2019 as you can see in the media investigation report in August 2019. I believe every person with a conscience has a responsibility to stop such illegal actions. I believe it was important to let Amazon know about this noncompliance. I just had no way to contact Amazon directly, so I thought of looking for media outlets to expose the situation. But because of the huge impact of Hengyang Foxconn, local media was reluctant to report it, so I had no choice but to find the organization, Chinese Labor Watch, that had previously exposed Hengyang Foxconn in 2018. I could only hope that Amazon would see these problems and urge Foxconn to carry out comprehensive rectification as soon as possible in order to avoid the incident from expanding out of control which would bring more trouble to Amazon. After the issue came to light, I was happy to see that Amazon immediately instructed the audit department to investigate and urge Hengyang Foxconn to rectify the problem. I just never thought I would be maliciously targeted by Hengyang Foxconn and pay the price of two years in jail.

On August 16, 2019, under the directive of Foxconn Hengyang, I was interrogated at the local police station; I was arrested on September 11, I was forced to make false confessions under extreme duress from the interrogators. I was detained and in custody until July 2020, when I was convicted by the local court. While I was detained in the police station for questioning, I endured tremendous physical and mental stress. The officers at the police station used corporal punishments and violence during the interrogation to force me to change my statement and say that I did commit the so-called criminal activities. The police officer battered me multiple times during the interrogation, he repeatedly slapped and hit me in my face and in the back of my head. I was also tortured during the interrogation process when I refused to collaborate and admit to their baseless accusations. I could not stand up because my hands were chained onto the little desk that connected the two armrests, I could not do anything but suffer through such grave pain. During the first few days of the interrogation, the officers purposefully turned the air conditioner to the maximum level in the interrogation room, and I felt extremely cold. Eventually, they got angry and handcuffed both hands to the bottom of the iron frame. I was unable to stand or sit down, and I spent the entire night in a semi-crouching position. By the next morning, I could no longer not endure it. My entire body shivered and shook when I reluctantly signed the documents provided by the police, next to an officer whom I feared would beat me again if I did not cooperate.

During this period, the local prosecutor's office returned the case to the Public Security Bureau for supplementary investigations twice, on January 3 and again on March 3, 2020, on

the grounds that "some key facts were unclear and evidence was insufficient". However, under pressure from your supplier Hengyang Foxconn, the Public Security Bureau reopened their investigation on me and reissued their original reports on February 3 and April 3, 2020 respectively. And so, their original goal of putting me in jail was finally achieved. The photos you have seen, which are obvious proof of illegal employment, were appraised at my own expense by two Judicial Expertise Centers in Hunan and Beijing, and they classified all of my photos as trade secrets (the lawyer I hired confirmed that the appraisers of the two reports did not have the qualification of appraisers as required by Chinese law and that their reports should not be accepted in a court of law). What is even more outrageous is that Hengyang Foxconn asked a Hunan accounting firm to categorize the 1.4 million RMB incurred in retiring illegal workers and re-recruiting legal employees as "losses caused by my infringement of its trade secrets" in order to achieve its promise to you and the public that "the irregularities have been immediately corrected". Under the strong pressure from Hengyang Foxconn, the local court was forced to ignore my lawyer's plea of not guilty and instead handed me a guilty verdict, a sentence of two years in prison, and a 10,000 RMB fine.

During my two years in prison, both my physical and mental health suffered tremendous damage. My 80-year-old father was bedridden after he suffered a stroke, and after learning that I was arrested in the detention center, he suddenly collapsed and was rushed to the hospital. He was resuscitated multiple times, but sadly, he passed away on November 2, 2019. Since I could not even go home for the funeral, everyone in my hometown found out that I was in jail. All the rumors circulating in my hometown overwhelmed my grieving elderly mother and nearly broke her spirit. This series of injustices also affected my dear sister and my wife. With the family breadwinner in prison, my wife suddenly lost her only source of income. With some financial support from relatives and friends, my wife was forced to take our son, who was still in the second grade of elementary school at the time, and transfer him to a school hundreds of kilometers away. After the move, our originally lively and outgoing son became silent and sullen because of his father's sudden disappearance from his life. Hengyang Foxconn is the source of all of this suffering. My father always taught me that I should be a good person, and because I followed my heart and believed that justice should be served, I reported the serious violations at Hengyang Foxconn. Yet my imprisonment has caused such great harm to me and my family!

After I was released from prison on September 10, 2021, my wife could not understand or accept what I had done, and to this day she has not forgiven me. My sorrow at my situation

still causes me to burst into tears, but I was moved to see the care and concern of righteous people like Li Qiang and other friends in the community who are still willing to help me. But the managers of Hengyang Foxconn were full of resentment towards me. On the day that I was released from prison, I went to Hengyang Foxconn to pick up my personal belongings. I wanted to meet with the Foxconn supervisor to understand the situation. But the supervisor refused to see me and told his subordinates to block me from the factory's door even though I was hungry and penniless after being released from prison. In the end, not only did Hengyang Foxconn management not see me, but they also called the police to remove me from Foxconn property. They said that I apparently had voluntarily resigned from Foxconn at the end of September 2019 and that it was impossible for management to see me since I was not a current Foxconn employee.

Thinking of what Hengyang Foxconn has done to me in the past two years, I feel angry. But I am just a person at the bottom of society; I have no voice and no one to listen to me. After learning that Li Qiang was willing to convey my situation to the world, I could not help writing this letter to you because I was your loyal admirer when I was at Foxconn. I know that you resigned from your high salary Wall Street position and resolutely drove to Seattle and founded Amazon. I know that you started selling books online and went on to create the powerful Amazon empire. You once said, "We have a lot of problems on the earth, and we need to solve these problems" and "We need people who fight hard for their beliefs and try hard." Although the distance between me and you is farther than from space to the earth, I sought to follow in your footsteps, but when I "showed the courage" to report the problems at Hengyang Foxconn to the media, I was treated so unfairly. As the top executive of Hengyang Foxconn's largest customer, how do you feel about this?

Shakespeare once said: What's past is prologue. I would like to believe that Hengyang Foxconn has done better than before in terms of the labor environment, and I also hope that Amazon and you can respect my efforts and continue to follow up with suppliers to improve labor conditions. Although the price I had paid is too high for me, if I can get your attention and benefit the employees of all Amazon suppliers, I think it will be worth my effort.

Finally, as your faithful admirer, as a former employee of your company's client, as a victim, a son, a husband, and a father, I hope you can understand and pay attention to what happened to me. I would also like to ask you here: Can you ask Hengyang Foxconn to face up

to its own problems and to compensate and apologize to me? I was convicted and sent to jail because Hengyang Foxconn accused me of violating Chinese law by exposing the use of student and dispatch workers and because the actions Amazon took under its social responsibility standards in response to my whistleblowing caused economic losses to Foxconn. As the only customer of Foxconn in Hengyang, I hope that you will ask Foxconn in Hengyang to communicate with the local court and assist me in my complaint about the case so that the court can finally revoke my guilty verdict!

Thank you,
Tang Mingfang
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