

Opening Testimony – Eliza Pan
Monopoly Busters Caucus

Hearing: “AI Crossroads: Stopping Big Tech’s Race to Monopolize AI through Surveillance”
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Hello, my name is Eliza Pan. I’m the co-founder of Amazon Employees for Climate Justice. We are an independent group of Amazon workers. When I was still working at Amazon, despite retaliation, we successfully organized thousands of our coworkers in a campaign for the company to adopt its first ever public plan to reduce emissions.

When our group first began thinking about AI, we focused on its environmental impacts. We saw firsthand that Amazon is singularly focused on achieving AI dominance, spending more than any other company in Big Tech to build as many data centers as possible, damaging the environment and angering local communities.

The consequences of Amazon’s quest for AI dominance does not just come from data centers. The company’s push to integrate AI has deeply impacted the one and a half million workers it employs. While workers tell me that some aspects of AI are useful, the overall effect has been that they are under constant pressure to produce more with less. They feel they’re being monitored under a microscope, like they’re always behind, and like they could lose their jobs if they don’t use AI as much as possible. Many worry they are being forced to train their own AI replacements. Without intervention, we believe this will lead to an even greater power imbalance between corporations and workers than there is today.

We’ve done 1:1s, surveys, house meetings and forums with hundreds of workers about AI. Last year, we organized over 1,200 Amazon workers to sign an [open letter warning about the impacts of Amazon exec’s reckless AI push](#). Here is some of what we’ve heard. I’ll start with a story from someone we’ll call Sam, who works in fraud detection at Amazon, and says there is much more work than before because AI makes committing fraud so easy. Nevertheless, Sam says that when he was hired two years ago, there were three other people on his team, and he is now the only one left. Now, he is singlehandedly expected to complete the increased workload of his entire former team’s work including the work of his former manager. Despite figuring out how to do this, he is actually being paid less now than when he was hired, and a manager told him, the goal is to automate your work before someone else automates it. He navigates daily fears of being laid off even while exceeding expectations.

Another worker we’ll call Aaron confirmed Sam’s suspicions. Aaron told us he was hired to work on “responsible” generative AI for Amazon. But soon his job changed to trying to make AI make money as quickly as possible. One way to do that is to replace workers. There were programs to train artificial agents to act as technical program managers and executive assistants,

entire job categories within Amazon. And Aaron also learned that Amazon had been pressuring VPs from different orgs to hand over their employees' computer data to AGI teams. Aaron refused to participate, and says he does not know how far along that project is, because he was laid off during parental leave. He hopes we slow down AI development for the sake of his daughter.

For the workers who aren't displaced by AI, they are being surveilled by it. Delivery drivers deal with an AI camera system in their windshields that tracks their every moment behind the wheel. Amazon is also rolling out an AI chatbot that interprets this tracking system. If workers want to escalate their concerns or report an injury, they have to talk to an HR chatbot, which they say struggles with complex or nuanced information. This is not a recipe for worker autonomy or dignity.

It can feel impossible to advocate for yourself or your coworkers in conditions like this. Amazon reportedly spent [26 million](#) on anti-union labor consultants in 2025 alone. It disciplined our members when they gave public comment before the Seattle City Council in favor of more regulation on the data center buildout. Amazon is building a world where every movement and decision a worker makes is tracked. In a world like that, it's very hard to feel free enough to be creative, to resist compliance that you feel is dangerous, to communicate with your coworkers about anything sensitive, or to organize. And of course, it increases the pressure to perform. We obviously believe it is still possible to organize our coworkers, but the sense of fear is higher than it used to be.

Our biggest concern is that Amazon and other Big Tech companies will use AI to surveil and push down workers so much that they feel they cannot advocate for themselves or raise concerns about the dangerous impacts of their companies. Workers need the power to choose when to use AI. We need the security and support to build careers even as technology changes. We need to be able to organize without fear of retaliation, flag safety risks and issues, and just *talk* to each other without fear that the company is surveilling our every move. We need a say in the future that Amazon and the rest of Big Tech are building now.

Thank you.