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UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ROSA L. DELAURO

3RD DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

January 16, 2020

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The Honorable Loren Sweatt  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
United States Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Deputy Assistant Secretary Sweatt:

I urge the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to conduct a full and thorough investigation into the recent worker fatality that occurred at a poultry processing plant in Guntersville, Alabama owned by Pilgrim's Pride, a subsidiary of the Brazilian meatpacking conglomerate JBS SA.

This tragic fatality comes after several other troubling incidents in recent years, according to OSHA's own records. In 2016, the plant was cited for violating basic safety precautions after a worker suffered an amputation. Since July 2017, the plant has reported three severe injuries; none of which resulted in any OSHA plant inspection. And, this past spring, the plant was cited for not following OSHA's process safety management standard for highly hazardous chemicals.

Despite this appalling track record on workplace safety, in April 2019 the plant sought, and received, a special waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to increase the speed of their poultry slaughter line. Increased line speeds can impact all workers in the plant, and, as you are aware, there is a growing body of data documenting the association between faster line speeds and worker injuries.

I have concerns regarding the agency's commitment to investigating this matter, in light of the fact that OSHA currently has the fewest number of inspectors in recent history. All workers have a right to a safe workplace, and no worker should ever have to sacrifice their life for a paycheck.

The agency must make sure that this fatality, and all worker fatalities, receives the resources and comprehensive attention it deserves.

Sincerely,

ROSA L. DELAURO

Chair

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
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