

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 8, 2020

Bruce Caswell
President and Chief Executive Officer
Maximus Inc.
1891 Metro Center Drive
Reston, VA 20190

Dear Mr. Caswell:

We write to express our concern that Maximus, the largest call center contractor for the federal government, has not taken the necessary steps to protect its workforce from Coronavirus. Between 2008 and 2018, Maximus received nearly \$2 billion in government contracts to administer health care services and cash-benefit programs.¹ Yet, while Maximus's call center employees work with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state governments across the country to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and to relay CDC guidance to concerned callers, they are themselves asked to work in an environment that fails to adhere to CDC guidance.²

Specifically, we are concerned by recent reports that Maximus held a training for 70 employees in a facility that was not large enough to allow for social distancing.³ Allegedly, attendees were provided a single bottle of sanitizer to share, and were asked to sanitize their workstations themselves.⁴ Outside the training, Maximus call center employees have reportedly been asked to work in close proximity to one another, at times even having to share desks and equipment.⁵

The working environment has led to the closure of several of their call centers for suspected or confirmed coronavirus outbreaks. In light of these closures, it is even more concerning that Maximus has yet to create a telework infrastructure to allow all workers to perform their jobs safely at home. Adding to our concern is Maximus's paid sick leave policy, which leaves approval to management's discretion,⁶ and does not provide paid leave to many workers when a worksite is closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak.⁷ We are also concerned that, at some of its call centers, Maximus has implemented premium pay that is contingent on working a minimum number of hours each week. Accessing that pay increase may create a financial incentive for workers to come to work while sick—thus increasing the risk of workplace transmission.

The concerns raised in this letter reflect the concerns of many Maximus employees. We understand that the call centers that Maximus operates are critical to the health and safety of millions of American families. It is equally critical that the health and safety of Maximus's call

¹ <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2020/02/maximus-health-insurance-union-pay-wage-theft/>

² <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/cdc-contractor-failed-follow-coronavirus-rules-worker-got-sick-whistleblower-n1184811>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ <https://cwa-union.org/news/releases/workers-demand-maximus-take-more-proactive-steps-protect-employees-coronavirus>

⁶ <http://maximus.com/employees>

⁷ Company communication to employees in Phoenix on April 8, 2020. On file at CWA.

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center employees remain paramount.

We ask that you provide a written response to the concerns raised in this letter, and to the questions listed below, no later than May 20.

- Will senior leadership at Maximus agree to meet with the workers' organizing committee to address concerns around workplace safety?
- What steps has Maximus taken to ensure its workers are able to maintain social distancing while at work?
- What is the timeline for Maximus creating a telework infrastructure to allow its workers to work remotely?
- Will Maximus provide premium pay to all of its workers, not just those who meet the threshold of hours worked?

Sincerely,

/s/ Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

/s/ Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Bernard Sanders
United States Senator