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King Soopers open as workers strike

By

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King Soopers employees in the United Food & Commercial Workers Local 7, which represents approximately 17,000 grocery workers, declined to accept what King Soopers'/Kroger described as its last, best and final offer, voting by 95 percent to strike. The retailer called the union's decision reckless and self-serving, without regard for the implications to associates and Coloradans.

"Local 7 is putting politics before people and preventing us from putting more money in our associates' pockets," said Joe Kelley, president of King Soopers and City Market.

The union said the strike comes on the heels of a report by the Economic Roundtable, Hungry at the Table, which found that more than two-thirds of Kroger workers struggle to afford rent and food due to poverty-level wages and part-time schedules. The independent report analyzed the working and living conditions of over 36,000 Kroger workers in four states, including Colorado.

The retailer countered, saying the Economic Roundtable information was conducted with limited data of select communities to mischaracterize workers and their compensation packages. "Based on the organization's actual data and official government data, our findings show the organization pays hourly associates higher wages and benefits compared to its peers in the overall retail industry," said Nam Pham, managing partner at ndp | analytics and co-author of a report commissioned by The Kroger Family of Cos., parent company of King Soopers.

"The company's 'last, best, and final' offer, in many ways, is worse than its previous offers," said Kim Cordova, president of UFCW Local 7. "We strike because it has become clear this is the only way to get what is fair, just, and equitable for the grocery workers who have risked their lives every day just by showing up to work during the pandemic."

King Soopers announced that stores will remain open to continue delivering on its commitment to provide fresh food and other essentials to the communities they serve.

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