

Bad Faith Nation

The record begins before the anger.

Darren Fonzseu | October 22, 2026

Workers Won't Be Silent

Full film: <https://youtu.be/TCLgNJ7ax-M>

Rev. William Barber, faith leaders, union leaders, and my own liberal left: put a National Workers' Compensation Commission and enforceable federal minimum standards on the table. Then tell injured workers who will carry that demand into law.

Read the record from the beginning. Hear the earlier calls. Hear the requests for help. Put them beside the angry messages that followed. My history includes polite appeals, arguments, promises, referrals, and anger. The federal policy question runs through it all.

I am an injured worker who came to my own side asking for help. I wanted the movements speaking for labor and poor people to fight for workers after an injury took away their ability to earn a living. I brought a specific demand. I kept asking who would take responsibility for it.

In October 2015, Patty Murray, Bernie Sanders, and Bobby Scott urged stronger federal oversight of state workers' compensation programs. They warned about weakened protections and costs shifted onto injured workers, families, and public programs. That warning was public. Workers did not invent the problem.

The question was what would follow.

In a preserved 2016 exchange, Washington State Senator Maralyn Chase acknowledged that I had an issue she believed legitimate. She proposed a task force, hearings, and legislation. She also drew the boundary clearly: "While we cannot change federal rules we can change state rules."

That exchange includes objections to my attacks on people and boundaries about my posts. Those belong in the record too. So does the acknowledgment of a legitimate issue. What happened to the proposed hearings and task force? Who took the federal question to the people who could act on it?

The Tyler Vega phone-call video was published September 16, 2018. Listen to the exchange. Vega proposes advocacy and further conversation involving an attorney. I explain why a referral leaves the national policy question unresolved. Those words must be measured

against the work that followed. A conversation alone does not deliver an enforceable protection.

On September 21, 2018, I published my call to the Snohomish County Human Rights Commission. The staff member confirms that Carin Chase is the chair. This was another attempt to put injured workers' federal rights before people working in the name of human rights. A local body's powers may be limited. The need for someone to carry a federal demand forward remains.

Then hear my call to Reverend Barber's office, published November 4, 2019. Hear how I speak. Hear the request for help. That polite appeal belongs in this story before anyone reduces it to the language in a later email.

The recorded appeal to Senator Chase published November 9, 2019 brings the question back again: why does the workers' compensation demand keep becoming a healthcare discussion? I support healthcare. I am asking who will fight for the federal protections injured workers need alongside it.

In my February 21, 2020 recording, I put my account of Republican referrals on the record. I said workers were being steered toward a Republican workers' compensation lawyer while our federal demand remained unresolved. That is my contemporaneous account of what I was being told. Put it beside the actual calls and written responses. Hear the people involved in their own words.

On February 25, 2020, James Potter acknowledged the need for standardization among state compensation systems. Writing as a universal healthcare advocate, he argued that the compensation fight required separate legislation and should not weigh down Medicare for All. He also argued that Medicare for All would benefit injured workers and that compensation reform was a struggle worth taking on.

There is the priority question, plainly stated. If it is a separate struggle we need to take on, who takes it on? Who organizes it? Who sponsors the legislation? When does the worker get a public progress report?

The preserved description of my March 13, 2020 Jason Call video reproduces a written response attributed to him. It identifies his work on I-1600 and says: "Medicare For All and Whole Washington are still my primary objectives." The video also preserves the conflict over my criticism. Stating campaign objectives and objecting to my language do not answer what commitment there is to the federal compensation demand.

On August 12, 2020, Washington's Poor People's Campaign replied. State tri-chair Nathan Black said the issue was likely important to the campaign. He objected to my message, told me to build a relationship and educate the campaign, and said it would not respond to threats.

My preceding message was angry and included abusive language. That context belongs in the record. So do the earlier requests. An objection to my wording still did not answer the policy question.

“Try educating us” also needs to be read beside the earlier record. The preserved thread itself includes the link to my earlier Barber office call. By then I had already made that appeal. The question is what happened to the request: was it evaluated, referred, adopted, rejected, or left without a stated position on a national commission and federal minimum standards?

That was a Washington campaign reply. My question to Reverend Barber today is direct: what explicit commitment will your movement make to injured workers’ federal compensation protections?

Whole Washington’s historical I-1600 endorsement list includes Maralyn Chase, Tyler Vega, and Tamborine Borrelli. Its endorsement pages also identify Carin Chase as a supporter. The Borrelli archive adds another part of that political history. It records discussion of state single payer and her turn toward Trump. Workers are entitled to examine those positions beside the promises made in labor’s name. Changing political camps does not answer what happens to the worker seeking an enforceable federal floor.

I kept speaking through music too. In 2024 I made “Echoes of Silence,” invoking Martin Luther King Jr.’s unfinished work and calling for federal standards and a national commission. I also made “Silent Betrayal,” which directly addresses Reverend Barber and asks where the commitment to injured workers is. These songs are part of the history of my appeals. They show me using another peaceful way to make the demand heard.

King’s connection to labor is concrete. In 1968 he supported the Memphis sanitation strike for safety, wages, benefits, and union recognition. Two sanitation workers’ deaths helped bring that struggle to a breaking point. The Bureau of Labor Statistics records 36 fatal work injuries among refuse and recyclable material collectors in 2024. Each death leaves a family. The need for safe work, meaningful benefits after injury, and security after a workplace death remains urgent.

That is why I ask faith leaders to connect the moral language to a named policy commitment. The Poor People’s Campaign’s published agenda includes worker, healthcare, and immigrant demands. Injured workers are directly affected people too. Give us a seat in developing the compensation policy. Say the words: a renewed National Workers’ Compensation Commission and enforceable federal minimum standards.

America had a national compensation commission in 1972. A renewed commission could investigate current gaps and hear injured workers directly. Lawmakers would still have to turn recommendations into enforceable protections. Name the sponsors and the legislative work needed to do that.

We need BOTH healthcare and meaningful rights after workplace injury. A medical appointment does not replace lost wages. It does not supply disability benefits, rehabilitation,

or a fair appeal. A state healthcare proposal cannot establish a federal compensation floor for workers across America.

The actual bill language matters. Section 801 of the 2025 Medicare for All proposal provides for reimbursement by liable compensation carriers for covered occupational medical care. That medical coordination provision does not itself establish comprehensive national minimum standards for wage replacement, disability benefits, and fair claims. Those protections need their own explicit provisions and their own sustained organizing.

The workers' compensation bargain generally exchanges defined benefits without proving employer fault for protection from many workplace-injury lawsuits. The worker's side of that bargain must remain meaningful. When benefits fall short, who carries the loss-the worker, the family, or public programs? That is the cost-shifting question the 2015 congressional warning put before the country.

My own liberal left should be able to answer it. Unions should be able to answer it. Faith leaders invoking King should be able to hear the worker asking it. A referral needs follow-through. A proposed task force needs a public account of what happened. A recognized problem needs a legislative campaign.

WE CALL FOUL when our demand keeps becoming something to discuss separately, later, or after the next election. Read the earlier record before deciding the worker's anger is the whole story. Hear the calm calls as well as the hard words. Answer the issue that runs through them.

Will you support a renewed National Workers' Compensation Commission? Will you support enforceable federal minimum standards? Who will sponsor the legislation, organize for it, and report back to the workers whose lives depend on meaningful protection?

Put the federal demand on the table. Publish your position. Give us the next step and a date.

Darren Fonzseau
Workers Won't Be Silent.

Sources and original recordings

Public documents and Darren's archived recordings. Dates described as publication dates identify when an archive appeared; they do not independently establish when each conversation was recorded.

Whole Washington historical I-1600 endorsements

<https://wholewashington.org/i-1600-endorsements/>

Whole Washington endorsements

<https://wholewashington.org/endorsements/>

Scott Stafne's 2018 Republican party preference-official Washington primary results

<https://results.vote.wa.gov/results/20180807/congressionaldistrict1.html>

Carin Chase's county commission service

<https://www.carinchase.com/about>

2015 congressional warning-Murray, Scott, Sanders

<https://www.murray.senate.gov/murray-scott-sanders-urge-stronger-oversight-of-state-workers-compensation-programs/>

1972 commission history-John Burton's congressional testimony, November 17, 2010

<https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/imo/media/doc/documents/111/pdf/testimony/20101117JohnBurtonTestimony.pdf>

Tyler Vega call-archived publication September 16, 2018

<https://youtu.be/x9P3HzNPrG0>

Snohomish County Human Rights Commission call-archived publication September 21, 2018

<https://youtu.be/8iNs-vU1hls>

Call to Reverend Barber's office-archived publication November 4, 2019

<https://youtu.be/udVMnTSTYII>

Recorded appeal to Senator Maralyn Chase-archived publication November 9, 2019

<https://youtu.be/u133XZgjlXo>

Why Are Berniecrats Telling Us To Vote For Republicans?-Darren's February 21, 2020 account

<https://youtu.be/YqOdqhKVDho>

CallForCongress Responds To Injured Workers Accusations-archived publication March 13, 2020; written response reproduced in its preserved description

<https://youtu.be/FbcsUY6nQzM>

Tamborine Borrelli archive-state single payer and Trump

<https://youtu.be/ZBZBeoTVCIY>

Echoes of Silence: A Tribute to MLK's Unfinished Work

<https://youtu.be/jUQg-VoEzIQ>

Silent Betrayal-archived publication June 8, 2024

<https://youtu.be/FfxDmpHRvqs>

King and the Memphis sanitation workers-National Archives

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/memphis-v-mlk>

2024 fatal occupational injuries-BLS, selected occupations; refuse and recyclable material collectors: 36 deaths

<https://www.bls.gov/charts/census-of-fatal-occupational-injuries/rate-and-number-of-fatal-work-injuries-in-selected-occupations.htm>

Poor People's Campaign's 2022 short agenda

https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Third-Recon.-Agenda_short_v6.pdf

2025 Medicare for All proposal, H.R. 3069, section 801

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-119hr3069ih/html/BILLS-119hr3069ih.htm>

Washington HB 1445, including occupational-care coordination in section 129

<https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/Biennium/2025-26/Htm/Bills/House%20Bills/1445.htm>

The 2016 Chase exchange, February 2020 Potter email, and August 2020 Washington campaign reply are preserved in Darren's original correspondence archive. The film presents relevant excerpts with their source context. Dates identified above as publication dates do not independently establish when a conversation was recorded.

Read and share

Full film: <https://youtu.be/TCLgNJ7ax-M>

Public op-ed: <https://polite-oyster-74gk.here.now/bad-faith-nation/>

Substack: <https://workerswontbesilent2025.substack.com/p/bad-faith-nation-the-record-begins>