

Communications

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LOCAL 4250

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CWA Executive Board Approves Separate Strike Authorizations at AT&T

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Washington, D.C. – The executive board of the Communications Workers of America approved strike action if fair contracts cannot be reached in negotiations between CWA and five AT&T operations: AT&T East, AT&T Midwest, AT&T Southwest, AT&T West and AT&T Legacy, a nationwide unit. The action means that a strike could take place at any or all of the AT&T operations once the CWA president sets the strike dates.

The negotiations cover 125,000 CWA represented workers covered by six contracts, including workers at AT&T Southeast; that contract expires Aug. 8. The five contracts expire Saturday night, Apr. 4

"Negotiations are continuing but we're very far apart on several important issues. It's time for management to get serious and step up the pace of bargaining if we're going to reach an agreement at contract expiration," said CWA Executive Vice President Annie Hill.

CWA members had voted by 88 percent to give CWA leaders authorization to call a strike if quality contracts cannot be reached. The vote was a strong message of support for CWA's bargaining teams. AT&T takes care of executives and investors and the company needs to meet its responsibilities to workers and retirees as well, CWA negotiators point out.

AT&T is a very successful and profitable company, even in these bad economic times. The company posted profits of \$12.9 billion last year and AT&T executives have said it is on track for solid growth this year. AT&T should be a leader in helping turn the economy around and in providing good middle class jobs, not cutting jobs and benefits, said Hill.

AT&T employees are very concerned about the company's attempt to cut health care benefits by shifting even more costs to workers and to retirees on fixed incomes, and about access for workers to the "jobs of the future," the new work created by changing technology.