



4/8/09

CWA D4 AT&T Midwest Bargaining Report #22

Bargaining continued yesterday with discussions on healthcare in our healthcare "discussion group." Evidently, there was some confusion on management's part on what CWA believes about this important issue. To help clear up that confusion, here is a public statement of our key principles on the issue of healthcare:

- We are very proud of the Midwest benefits plans that we have jointly built over decades. We have no interest in any "national plans," management plans, or plans from other CWA contracts.
- We have always been willing to work in partnership to make reasonable changes that make our plans more cost effective. In every contract since 1983, we have agreed to some kind of changes to our benefits that addressed the issue of costs. What we are NOT willing to do is accept the kind of massive cost shifting that would destroy our members' standard of living and devastate those unfortunate families that had huge medical expenses due to tragic circumstances.
- We have a moral responsibility to take care of our retirees that is just as important as taking care of our members who are active employees.
- Medical is not the only benefit issue. We care deeply about all of these benefits, including disability, vision, dental, prescription and much more.
- Shifting healthcare costs from them to us is not a solution. At a moment when America is trying to solve the healthcare crisis, AT&T should be by our side...not on our backs.

We remain far apart on many issues, but have been working extremely hard on healthcare in the hope that if we made progress on this issue, we would start to make progress everywhere. Effective bargaining starts with understanding. We have worked hard to understand their point of view, but it is not yet clear that they understand ours. Your bargaining committee is doing everything we can to help them understand, but perhaps a more significant mobilization effort would help focus their attention.

MOBILIZATION NEWS: Mobilization continues to heat up across the District as we enter day four of Strike Standby. Members are currently on the job, but are aware a strike could be called at anytime.

Thursday, April 9 is round two of "Box Busters."

Check out the following link to see Local 4900 in action:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VurUJAusLeo&feature=ema> Thanks to Local 6222 for the music.

Contact your Local's mobilization coordinator or officers to find out about your Local's activities.

Please tell all your friends and family to go to www.standupforworkers.com and sign the online support statement for our fight to win a fair contract.

The next report will be on Thursday, April 9, or sooner should developments warrant.