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LOCAL 4250

Workers of America

(AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO)

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CWA D4 AT&T Midwest Bargaining Report #38

4/29/09

Informal talks continued yesterday on a range of issues, including health care and employment security. While we are still far from resolving all of the major issues, we are having dialogue that leads to a better understanding of each other's positions. Talks will continue today.

Literally, thousands of members sent in email questions to CWA HQ when we had the national e-meeting last week. Of course, the leadership couldn't answer all of them 'on the air', so the remaining questions were sent out to each District to handle. In District 4, our staff will work with Local leaders, over the next week, to assure that members get answers to their questions. However, there were two questions that came up very frequently, so we thought we'd answer them in today's report:

Q: "Why are there not more details about the proposals of both sides in these bargaining reports?"

A: Bargaining is about finding common ground, a compromise between the two party's positions. In a simple negotiation, like buying car, it is only about one thing---price. In labor negotiations, there are routinely dozens of issues. When health care is involved, like this one, there are literally hundreds of issues. It would be impossible to accurately represent all of the details of either side's proposals in these reports. Of course, representing them inaccurately could have a negative effect on the process, so our reports (and AT&T's) deal with the issues in general terms to provide a better climate for ultimately reaching an agreement. We understand that not knowing exactly what is going on is frustrating; and have tried, to the best of our ability, to give members a good sense of what is happening around key issues. At some point, we expect to reach a tentative agreement and all of the details will then be shared with every member as part of the ratification process.

Q: "How long can this go on"?

A: There is no definite answer to this question. In the history of CWA, there have been strikes that have lasted between 1 day and 7 1/2 months. There have been non-strike strategies that lasted from 1 day to 150 days. What we do know is that the two things that will get this done are effective mobilization and serious bargaining. We have done both, but evidently we need to do something better. We are confident that our bargaining committee is doing everything possible to reach a fair deal, so that means we have to continue to ramp up our mobilization efforts to bring this to a conclusion.

Mobilization News: Local 4217 has been holding informational pickets at their two largest locations, the O'Fallon, Illinois garage, and 721 Missouri Ave. in East St. Louis every Thursday. Tomorrow will be no exception. This past Saturday, along with members of Local 6300 in St. Louis, Local 4217 members distributed more than 500 handbills to fans at the Cardinals/Cubs baseball game with flyers informing the fans of our fight with AT&T.

A major rally, organized by Local 4108, will be held in front of the AT&T building in Saginaw, Michigan tomorrow to turn up the heat on the company.

You can stay on top of things by joining the Ready@AT&T network: Text the word, **“READY”** to 69866 for regular mobilization updates.

Please go to <http://www.standupforworkers.com> and sign our online support statement and spread the word among your family and friends.

The next report will be on Thursday, April 30, or sooner should developments warrant



**Randall Stephenson
at&t Corp. CEO**