



## **Mid-Atlantic Regional Bargaining Report #34**

**September 10, 2015**

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Bargaining team spent most of this week reviewing information provided by the company. There were no formal bargaining sessions held this week. There were off table discussions with the company regarding the accuracy of healthcare information the Company had provided.

One of the most time consuming burdens we have is to ensure the information we get is accurate and complete. This takes time and it is mandatory that we are thorough, as this information is used to refute the company's proposals and to justify ours. We are working diligently to hold this company accountable and to call them out on any incomplete information.

This bargaining team is committed to ensure we get a fair contract and language that provides relief from the constant harassment our members face daily. We are aware that this week the company has declared a Long Term Service Difficulty across most of Mid-Atlantic for FiOS work that has, in many cases, been ordered within the last 24 hours. This is unacceptable. We work so that we can have a good life and provide for our families. When we are forced to constantly work additional hours it takes away time from our families that we can never get back. We all understand emergency conditions may call for everyone to pitch in and clean up the trouble loads. These self-inflicted service difficulties and lifting of overtime caps are no more than the mismanagement of this company causing a 60 hour work week to be the norm for technicians. Working together by mobilizing in the field and holding the Company accountable at the bargaining table we hope to force this company into doing the right thing.

Almost all of the Company's original retrogressive demands remain on the table including:

- ✓ Significant increases in healthcare costs to all active members and retirees
- ✓ Choice between pension benefits and 401K savings plan benefits
- ✓ Freeze pension accrual at 30 years of service

- ✓ Eliminate Job Security
- ✓ Increase the 35 mile transfer provision to 60 miles
- ✓ Only pay home relocation benefits when transfers increase commute more than 60 miles
- ✓ Identified over 25 locations to consolidate into larger centers that would require most employees to relocate their homes
- ✓ No Cost of Living
- ✓ Reduced Corporate Profit Sharing
- ✓ Eliminate payment for daily overtime
- ✓ Eliminate double time
- ✓ Reduce differential payments
- ✓ Reduce Short Term Disability Payments
- ✓ Eliminate Accident Disability Plan
- ✓ Contract Out Fiber Facilities Transfers and Relocations
- ✓ Flexibility to assign employees temporarily into another state
- ✓ Further reductions to Tuition Assistance
- ✓ Reduce funding to joint committees
- ✓ Reduce Vacation Scheduling Percentages
- ✓ Amend Independent Medical Examination

Your Bargaining team is committed to finding ways to address both the concerns of the Company and the needs of our members in this round of negotiations. The Company continues to have only one goal, and that is to take back years of benefits and working conditions we have bargained over years of negotiations. The Company's agenda continues to include retrogressive demands across virtually every area of our contracts. It is more important than ever that we take this fight to a new level. Members must continue to mobilize. Every member needs to participate. Locals should continue to reach out to retirees to join with mobilization activities. This contract will not be won at the bargaining table alone – we need every member to participate in order to reach a fair agreement.

There will be a Town Hall Call on Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:15pm to provide updates on bargaining and our fight for a fair contract. Members can register for the call at <http://www.cwa-union.org/vzcall> or text VZCALL to 69866. The deadline for signing up is noon on Tuesday.