

# Communications

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## Workers of America



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Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As most of you know, Verizon and CWA entered into early bargaining. This was done in an effort to come to an agreement long before the end of the current contract, which ends on August 3, 2008. Despite the Union's best intentions, Verizon only wanted healthcare concessions for both active members and retirees and refused to enter into earnest discussions about various issues that you, the membership, have spoken on through the bargaining surveys. Due to the lack of progress and communication, CWA notified Verizon that we were ending early negotiations.

As your President and as a member of the bargaining team, I agree with this decision. We all want an early agreement and no one wants the possibility of a strike. This contract, however, is crucial to protect jobs and benefits.

We need stronger language on job protection, opportunities, better working conditions and better benefits. What we will not accept is concessions while a profitable company claims poverty.

Enclosed with this letter is a bargaining report from 11-19-07 which laid out what Verizon asked for and what the union proposed. Whether you are an active employee or retiree, all of you should agree that give-backs are the last thing that we should settle for. This process is just beginning. None of you should be discouraged. Verizon needs us to serve the customer and to grow. We have the power.

In Solidarity,

  
Christopher Lane  
President

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The Company's proposal includes employees paying part of the medical premium on a weekly basis, annual deductibles on prescription drugs, additional cost for not using mail order prescription drugs, additional cost for out of network pharmacies, increased cost of mail order pharmacy, HMO's will have drug cost increased, the MCN will cost now, out of pocket maximums would increase, increase in co-pays for doctor visits, penalties for failing to pre certify hospital visits, MEP-PPO eliminated, and increased costs to members for HMO's. In addition, the company demand included the elimination of retiree healthcare for workers hired after 8-3-08.

The Union placed its demands on the table. Those demands include

1. Work & Jobs of the Future
2. COLA
3. Corporate Profit Sharing
4. Pension Cash Out
5. Merger Agreements – (No Layoff – No Transfers)
6. All Existing District and Local Agreements extended
7. Wage Increases
8. Pension Increases
9. Remove the “Break in Service” clause in regard to the Pension Death Benefit in the Mid Atlantic Pension Plan.
10. Lump Sum Payment to all Retirees
11. ACFC – Increase funding for the ACFC and carry over any money not spent. Change the ACFC Coordinator title and make the wage and pension band equal to the Healthcare Benefit Coordinators.
12. Bargaining Unit Protection – Provide Bargaining Unit protections when employees are temporarily promoted to a management position.
13. Local Union Payroll Deduction – Establish payroll deduction for Community Service and or Scholarship Fund for each CWA Local.
14. 401K Improvements – Improve 401K by applying the 82% match to 6% of gross wage and establish a ROTH 401K Option.
15. Job Posting and Bidding – Provide job posting and bidding to internal candidates, including VCSI (where it exists in the bargaining unit), for promotions prior to hiring new employees.
16. Holidays – Add Martin Luther King's Birthday as a company paid holiday.
17. Regional Attendance Plan – Eliminate the Regional Attendance Plan.
18. Mandatory Overtime – Eliminate Mandatory Overtime.
19. Payment for Dr. Visits – Company to pay all costs associated with company required doctor visits.
20. Overtime Payment – Provide one and one half time pay for Saturday and two times pay for Sunday.
21. Vision Care Improvements – Improve eye care coverage to include Lasik surgery and provide vision care to all retirees.
22. Healthcare Improvements
23. Safe and Healthy Working Conditions
24. VCSI, Global Network, and Verizon Avenue need to address these subsidiaries in early negotiations.
25. The Union reserves its right to add to, delete from or modify its bargaining demands.

The Company demand on healthcare is concessionary and cost shifting to both active and retired employees and represents a huge step backwards.