

**CWA**

# NEWSLETTER

Communications Workers of America  
AFL-CIO, CLC  
501 Third Street, NW  
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## **CWA Reaches Tentative Agreement at AT&T Southwest**

CWA District 6 and AT&T have reached a tentative four-year agreement covering 27,000 CWA-represented workers at AT&T Southwest.

The tentative agreement provides for wage increases of 11.5 percent and pension band increases of 8 percent over the contract's four-year term, with cost of living adjustments in the final year. The contract maintains quality health care for active and retired workers and includes new job security protections, among other gains.



Members of CWA Local 3805 keep up the pressure for a fair contract at informational picket in Knoxville, Tenn.

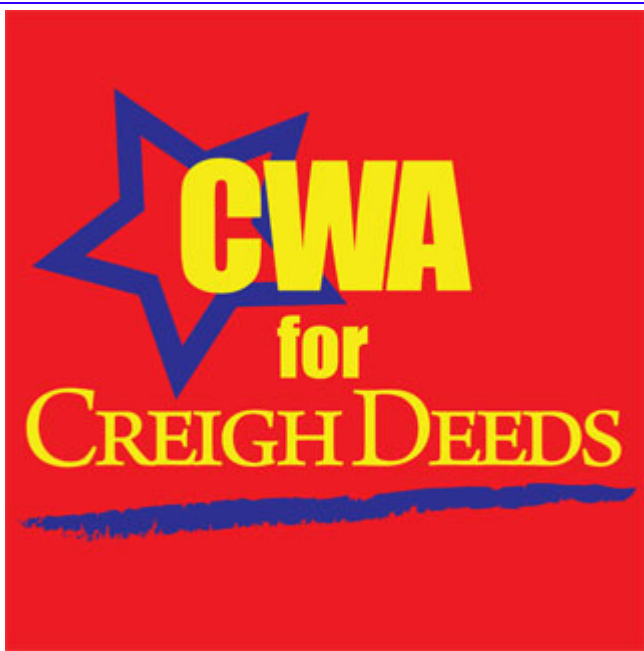
Read the details of the tentative settlement [here](#).

The District 6 bargaining committee said, "We felt it was important to stand our ground and push for the best possible contract we could achieve for the hard working union members of District 6." The committee unanimously recommends ratification of the agreement.

Contract information materials are being provided to locals and members, with a ratification vote to be completed November 11.

Negotiations are continuing for 40,000 CWAers at AT&T Southeast (District 3) and AT&T East (CWA Local 1298).

**CWAers Lead Campaign to Elect Creigh Deeds Virginia Governor,  
More Volunteers Needed Through Election Day Nov. 3**



CWA members in Virginia are working hard to elect a governor and other state leaders who support working families when voters go to the polls on Nov. 3.

CWA's Virginia state coordinator Richard Hatch said working people face a serious threat to jobs, benefits, workers' rights and their union voice unless Democrat Creigh Deeds is elected governor, along with other state leaders who support workers.

Hatch said CWA locals have been leading labor's efforts in Virginia, with members going door-to-door to CWA households, organizing phone banks, putting up yard signs and getting out the word that working families need Creigh Deeds.

In a letter to Virginia CWAers, CWA District 2 Vice President Ron Collins pointed out that Deeds' opponent Bob McDonnell and other Republican candidates for state office clearly don't support working families.

McDonnell opposes workers' rights and the Employee Free Choice Act, opposed the much needed extension of unemployment benefits for Virginians, backed a Verizon plan that would have resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs and hurt quality service, and more, Collins wrote. "The Republican candidate for attorney general, Ken Cuccinelli, says that he 'will not support collective bargaining for public employees or private employees in Virginia,'" Collins wrote.

This Saturday, Deeds will join CWAers and other union member volunteers in northern Virginia at the start of this weekend's labor walk. The event begins at 9 a.m. at the NOVA Area Labor Federation building, 4536 B John Marr Dr., in Annandale; CWAers are encouraged to turn out for the walks and other activities.

Hatch says this election is important. "Last year was about hopes for the future. This year is about the work to make that future come through," he said.

### **CWA's Bottom Line: Real Health Care Reform, No Tax on Benefits**

The health care bill that passed the Senate Finance Committee this week would be a disaster for working families and retirees. CWA is continuing to work with the Obama administration, supporters in Congress, other unions and allies for real reform.

There are now three legislative proposals on health care. H.R. 3200, America's Affordable

Health Choices Act, is the bill that best meets CWA's priorities: no tax on health care; all employers must pay their fair share; a public plan option; and protections for pre-Medicare retirees.



The bill produced by the Senate HELP Committee makes some improvements but doesn't do enough on employer mandates, and the Senate Finance Committee bill would make our health care system worse, not better. The Senate now will take up those two versions to produce one bill.

A new CWA report based on data from the Joint Committee on Taxation and an analysis by Citizens for Tax Justice found that 40 percent of health care plans would be hit with the excise tax in just six years. The tax would hit middle income families, older workers and those in hazardous jobs especially hard, the report found.

"This is a tax on the middle class and will lead to even more cost shifting to workers," said CWA President Larry Cohen. "It is simply wrong to make those employers who already are paying, pay even more by hitting them with a 40 percent excise tax while not requiring anything from employers who don't provide health care to employees."

CWAers are continuing to call their Senators to tell them not to tax workers' health care and make all employers pay their fair share. For more information, go to [www.healthcarevoices.org](http://www.healthcarevoices.org).

### **New Contract Adds Training Funds for NABET-CWA Members at Portland Station**

A new contract for NABET-CWA members at KOIN-TV in Portland, Ore., now includes company-paid training, a real plus for employees and management at a time of financial distress for the station's corporate owner.

New Vision Television, which owns about 20 stations nationwide, declared bankruptcy in July, as bargaining was getting underway. Still, the innovative training proposal from NABET-CWA Local 59051 negotiators helped wrap up talks in only six sessions.

"At a time of financial uncertainty for KOIN and for the industry as a whole, this was a creative way to provide a win-win for our members and their employers," NABET-CWA President John Clark said. KOIN's general manager was "very open" to the bargaining

language, he added.

Instruction in cutting edge technology will be provided through Lynda.com, a program of CWA-NETT Academy. The local's 50 members, who include camera operators, editors and master control technicians, will each get two weeks of access a year.

For locals interested in negotiating similar training programs for workers, here's the specific contract language:

"The company will acquire at least two licenses for Lynda.com. Each employee will be eligible to take up to two weeks of Lynda.com training each year. Such training will not be on company time nor be considered compensable time. A computer will be made available to any employee who needs computer access.

"Company will reimburse employees for up to \$500 for courses taken on CWA-NETT, but not more than 25 employees will be eligible for such reimbursement in any year. The employees must satisfy the criteria set forth by the company. Such training will not be on company time nor be considered compensable time. A computer will be made available for any employee who needs computer access."

### **Labor Dept. Rescinds Bush's Onerous LM-2/LM-3 Revisions**

Burdensome financial disclosure rules for labor unions that the Bush administration issued on its last day in office have been rescinded by the Department of Labor.

The Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards said the rules, involving the annual filing of LM-2 and LM-3 forms for large and small unions, were unnecessary and burdensome. The rules had been set to take effect Feb. 20, but the Obama administration delayed the effective date pending further review.

The Labor Department pointed out that federal law "requires a balancing of transparency with the need to maintain union autonomy without overburdening unions with reporting requirements." It said the Bush Administration's revisions "did not adequately consider this balance."

The very fact that the DOL had issued the rule the morning of the day Obama was sworn in indicates that politics was really behind the changes. "The intent of the new regulation was harassment, pure and simple," said CWA Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Rechenbach.

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