

April 17, 2008
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Local 824 member Anthony Girit is holding a “Failing In Our Service” sign. Girit told the *Tampa Tribune* that managers disciplined him 13 times in 7 months for not trying to sell a long list of Verizon products.

Tampa Local Protests Excessive Pressure at Call Center

IBEW Local 824 members and customers of Verizon picketed many of the company’s locations across the Tampa region on April 7, citing reports about how Verizon’s customer service quality is dropping off.

Members gathered at call centers and other facilities before their shifts.

“This is about people trying to do their jobs for customers, and they can’t because all managers care about is getting customers off the phone or selling them extra things,” said Doug Sellars, business manager of IBEW Local 824.

Members say the company has started putting excessive pressure on call center workers to sell products such as FiOS Internet and video rather than fixing customer bills. And they say Verizon now puts too much focus on its FiOS rollout and neglects the decades-old copper telephone line service.

Verizon can run to Nebraska, but it can’t hide . . .

Make Your Vote Count: Return Your Proxy to Your Union!

Verizon put this year’s annual meeting in Lincoln, Nebraska, making it hard for members to attend like so many did last year in Pittsburgh. But we can make our presence felt by voting our shares “against” all twelve members of the board of directors on the stock proxy. Rejecting the board of directors is a vote of “No Confidence” in VZ’s leadership.

Union activists will turn in the proxies at the meeting and use the question and answer period to have a dialogue with Ivan Seidenberg.

“In a contract year, it’s more important than ever to let Ivan and all shareholders know just

how concerned we are about the direction of the company,” said Leabern Kennedy, CWA Local 2204 Area Vice President.

“Our stewards spread the word, and now the proxies are coming in. Delivering them together with all the others will show our unity,” Kennedy added.

For a second time, VZB techs will attend the meeting.

“I’m going to Lincoln to tell Seidenberg that the union busting has got to stop,” said Dave Rogol, a VZB tech from Charlton, MA. “I think shareholders need to know how the divisions that management has created between its subsidiaries is hurting sales and customer satisfaction.”



While thousands of Verizon workers were at last year’s annual meeting in Pittsburgh, other members rallied in California and across the country.

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Proxies should be returned to your local union as soon as possible in order to have them delivered to the Verizon meeting. Be sure to vote and sign your proxy. CWA and IBEW recommend votes against all directors and for items 3 and 5. If you did not receive a paper proxy card, call 800-631-2355.

CWA and IBEW are not asking for discretionary authority to vote proxies on behalf of members. Please make sure you vote and sign your proxy.

Seidenberg Confronted at D.C. Demo

CWA members and Jobs with Justice activists picketed an event where Ivan Seidenberg was receiving a “Digital Patriot Award,” protesting the lack of FiOS in DC.

Marilyn Irwin, Vice President of CWA Local 2108, was there and found an opportunity to speak with Seidenberg. Here’s Irwin’s account of it:

“As I turned the corner, I saw that Ivan was walking right beside me, heading towards the side door. I said, “Oh, hi Ivan.” I handed him our flyer, explaining that we want FiOS brought to the Washington. I told him we also want a fair contract in August. He replied, “You ALWAYS get a fair contract.” I said, “No, not always. When the company wants me to start paying part of my health care premium after 35 years of service, I don’t consider that fair.”



W.Va. Law Would Ban Employer Captive-Audience Meetings

The West Virginia House of Delegates overwhelmingly passed legislation to prevent employers from using captive audience meetings to intimidate workers who want to organize. The bill would prohibit employers from requiring employees to attend “captive audience” meetings on either political or labor-related issues. The measure (H.B. 4132) passed 64-33 on Feb. 26 and awaits action in the State Senate.

To date, New Jersey is the only state that has a law preventing employers from using mandatory meetings to scare workers who want a union. Thus far, anti-labor forces have beaten back similar measures in Colorado, Michigan, and Oregon.

Verizon management has used similar aggressive tactics to prevent employees in VZ Wireless and VZ Business from joining CWA and IBEW.

Last year, American Rights at Work released a research report revealing how Verizon uses this model to interfere with its employees’ rights to form unions, putting good jobs and quality service at risk.

Check out the report at: <http://www.americanrightsatwork.org/publications/general/new-report-verizons-broken-promises.html>

Visit Unity@Verizon on the web for more! www.cwa-union.org/verizon

What’s happening in your area? Send information and photos to unityatverizon@cwa-union.org and we’ll publish them here.



Tear Down the Wall at Verizon!

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