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How CWA Gets It Done



*Organizing, Representation,
Legislative Action/Coalitions*

WORKING Together

Working Families Deserve Better than What We'll Get in the New Congress



Larry Cohen
CWA President

The results of the midterm elections were a disaster, and for working and middle class families, the new Congress will be the worst in decades.

This isn't because the Republicans or Democrats won the election. It's definitely because corporations spent billions of dollars in this election cycle and now are ready to call in their favors.

We've already seen corporate interests moving to do away with gains workers have made during the Obama administration: the Chamber of Commerce has said it will set up a new unit to "scrutinize" initiatives by the Labor Department, National Labor Relations Board and other agencies that support workers' interests.

The 2010 elections were radically changed by the Supreme Court's "Citizens United" decision, which allowed unprecedented spending by corporations, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and "advocacy groups" fronting for right-wing and corporate interests that didn't want to put their names on their message. This unchecked spending has pushed our political process back one hundred years, to the days when only the Big Trusts and robber barons had a voice.

Today, these corporate special interests have a lot of influence on Capitol Hill, where they are very good at working the Senate rules to keep legislation that would benefit working families from even being debated, let alone come to a vote.

This past year, the Senate remained stuck in gridlock, with obstructionists in the Republican Party blocking important initiatives like restoring bargaining rights through

the Employee Free Choice Act, ending tax breaks for corporations that move jobs overseas, providing bargaining rights for public safety officers and stopping pay discrimination against women, among others. The House passed these measures but the Senate couldn't even discuss them.

Debate is essential in a democracy. Preventing debate robs the public of one of the fundamental rights of our political system: the right to hold our elected representatives accountable for the actions they take, or don't take.

And it's not just the filibuster that's the problem. Holds, secret holds and threatened filibusters by Senators meant government agencies like the National Labor Relations Board couldn't do their jobs. The NLRB had just two members for nearly a year because of holds placed on nominees to fill the remaining seats. That denied justice for thousands of workers who were illegally fired or mistreated by employers.

Just 43 percent of President Obama's appointments were confirmed by the Senate in the first 18 months of his presidency. Compare that to the 87 percent of nominations in the George W. Bush administration who were confirmed over that same 18-month period.

CWA is working with other unions and progressive groups for reform of the Senate rules that will end these destructive holds and will bring about open debate and 'yes or no' votes after Senators engage in full discussion of the issues. Isn't that why we elect them to office?

Looking ahead, it won't be easy. We face tough bargaining in all our industries, a Congress determined to support financial and capital interests over the needs of ordinary citizens, and an economy that's just not working for working and middle class families.

So we do what we always do. We reset, we set new

strategies for positive change and we work the CWA triangle: organizing, bargaining and legislative/political action and coalition building around our key issues.

This issue of the CWA News looks at the ways we're doing just that in this difficult climate.

Debate is essential in a democracy. Preventing debate robs the public of one of the fundamental rights of our political system: the right to hold our elected representatives accountable for the actions they take, or don't take.

Our overall goals remain the same:

- Restoring bargaining and organizing rights, which for U.S. workers are near the bottom of the global economy. Beginning in the post-election legislative session, we've been mobilizing to win collective bargaining for public safety officers, most likely the only opportunity we'll have this year to expand workers' bargaining rights.

- Creating secure, sustainable jobs in the United States and ending the offshoring of jobs that has devastated millions of families, entire communities and important U.S. industries. We're calling on Congress to focus on secure, sustainable jobs, including legislation to keep call center jobs in the United States.

- Real retirement security, not plans to privatize Social Security and Medicare or extend the retirement age to 70.

- A major initiative is to reform the Senate rules that have produced two years of gridlock and obstruction in the 111th Congress and very little for working and middle class families.

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The CWA Triangle: How We Get It Done

CWAers are facing big challenges today. Mergers, changes in technology and budget cuts all have a big effect on our jobs and our futures. This issue of the CWA News looks at how we'll keep fighting back, working the CWA Triangle of Organizing, Representation and Legislative and Political Action/Coalitions, to get things done for working families.

Worker Unity: Key to Good Contracts, Strong Bargaining Units at Comcast

CWA locals are taking on Comcast and coming through with good contracts and strong bargaining units. That's exactly what happened in Detroit and Port Huron, Mich., where members of Locals 4100 and 4008 negotiated and overwhelmingly ratified new contracts.

"CWAers at Comcast have to fight every day for their existence," said CWA District 4 Vice President Seth Rosen. "They're not just fighting for fair treatment and good contracts, they have to deal continually with a company that is determined to eliminate them," he said.

Under such conditions, it takes hard work and a high level of solidarity to bargain a contract and withstand a company-supported decert and that is what the CWAers accomplished.

In Detroit, Comcast persuaded a group of newer workers to file for decertification, promising them raises if they got rid of the union. Ultimately, the very workers Comcast



Union solidarity beat a company campaign to get rid of Local 4100 representation at Comcast in Detroit, and helped win a new contract. From left, local bargaining team members Charles Collier, Vince Baldwin, Nikkia Johnson and Rodney Woods.

counted on as anti-union votes sided with CWA and helped bargain a contract that provides wage increases of 5.8 percent over the three years, plus retroactive pay increases ranging from 6.9 to 11.3 percent.

"Educating members and getting them involved made a world of difference," said Local 4100 President Greg Wynn.

CWA Staff Representative Shannon Kirkland said CWA members invited the worker leading the decert to join them in a bargaining session. "He found out Comcast had deceived him and he came to

the bargaining table on our side," Kirkland said.

In Port Huron, Local 4008 members bargained a three-year contract that provides a 5.8 percent wage increase over the contract term, a signing bonus and a new post-retirement health care benefit, among other improvements. "The retirement health care stipend follows a formula based on years of service that will provide up to \$800 a month to help reimburse health care costs," Local President Mike Schulte said.

NLRB Hearing Set for January On Threats, Firings at DISH

After years of delays and all too often inaction on workers' complaints, the National Labor Relations Board has scheduled a hearing for Jan. 18 in Fort Worth to investigate charges that Dish Network managers in Texas repeatedly threatened workers and fired at least one union supporter during an organizing campaign for CWA representation. A hearing will be held on a long list of unfair labor practice charges.

Despite a vicious anti-worker campaign, 62 percent of workers at

two Dallas-area Dish Network facilities, in Farmers Branch and North Richland Hills, voted in February to join CWA Local 6171. Since then, the company has accelerated its union-busting, with firings, greater use of contractors and drastic changes in working conditions.

"Dish Network is cut out of the same anti-union cloth as the cable companies," CWA District 6 Vice President Andy Milburn said. "Both units had about 50 members when they began to organize and the company has laid off half of them.

But the remaining employees are determined to have a union in spite of Dish Network's tactics."

The NLRB complaint includes multiple allegations involving wages and benefits and threats or promises based on whether workers rejected or approved the union. Managers also threatened that employees who supported the union would fail quality assurance checks. One manager "coerced and threatened employees" by ordering a union supporter to leave the premises, threatening to call the police if the worker refused.

Big Bargaining In 2011

Here are just some of the major CWA contracts that will be bargained in 2011.

EMPLOYER	COVERED WORKERS	CONTRACT EXPIRATION
United Airlines	15,400	Continuing
NBC	1,500	Continuing
New York Times/Digital	1,000	3/30/2011
AT&T Mobility-Puerto Rico	1,300	2/18/2011
ABC	1,900	3/31/2011
Kaleida Health	4,000	5/31/2011
General Electric	7,900	6/19/2011
New Jersey State Employees	40,000	6/30/2011
Verizon East	37,800	8/6/2011
Windstream	700	Multiple contracts in 2011
CenturyLink	2,500	Multiple contracts in 2011
New Mexico State	2,800	12/31/2011
Piedmont Airlines	3,000	First Contract



TNG-CWA Locals Win Key Legal Battles

TNG-CWA members are keeping up the fight for job rights — and winning:

■ A panel of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld \$5 million in damages for Chinese Daily News workers who faced harassment, threats and firings while trying to organize with Local 9400 beginning in 2001. The battle led to a lawsuit over unpaid overtime and no breaks. TNG-CWA called the ruling a "great precedent," confirming that most reporters are covered by wage and hour law.

■ A three judge panel from the Second Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld the right of The Newspaper Guild of New York, Local 31003, to arbitrate grievances filed since its contract with Thomson Reuters expired on Feb. 28, 2009. "Simply put, we won the battle with Thomson Reuters about our right to fight for our members," Local 31003 President Bill O'Meara said. "This is a clear repudiation of a cornerstone of Thomson Reuters legal strategy."

■ An NLRB judge in Puerto Rico found that El Vocero unlawfully fired 107 circulation workers, members

of UPAGRA, TNG-CWA Local 33225, in order to move their jobs to a non-union shell company. "The credible evidence reveals that El Vocero's financial situation was improving when the company announced its decision to close the circulation department in July 2009," the judge wrote.

■ An administrative law judge said the Albany, N.Y., Times Union newspaper illegally dismissed 11 workers in 2009 when it was supposed to be negotiating lay-off criteria with TNG-CWA. The publisher is appealing the ruling and hasn't followed the judge's order to rehire the workers, but the union is optimistic. "We won the case and they have an uphill battle now, because the judge's decision is very solidly in our favor," TNG-CWA Local 31034 President Tim O'Brien said.

■ A federal judge in St. Louis has ruled that Post-Dispatch retiree medical benefits are a vested right and that the company must arbitrate. "This isn't over, we know that," Local 36047 Business Representative Shannon Duffy said. "But we're going to keep fighting until we win this thing for once and for all."

In Right-to-Work States, Members Do the Hard Work of Organizing

Local union leaders and activists in District 6 — Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas — have signed up nearly 4,000 new members since the district launched an aggressive, one-on-one organizing initiative in 2010 with a special focus on internal organizing.

Local union activists are meeting with and talking to workers one-on-one in an effort that District 6 Vice President Andy Milburn says is critical to CWA's continuing to grow in the industry. "Our union's ability to reach out and organize unrepresented telecom workers and to bargain good contracts depends on how strong we are as locals," he said. "We can't do either effectively if we don't have a strong membership base."

Many of the non-members at companies like AT&T Mobility are young, so organizers across the district are using flip cameras, social networking websites, and many different types of communication to reach out. CWAers are circulating videos of members describing in their own words why belonging to CWA is important.

"Non-members need to be engaged and educated about CWA," says Local 6229 President Phillip Ramirez. "And we need to stay in touch." The local signed up 26 new members at seven AT&T Mobility stores across the Rio Grande Valley by reconnecting with the workers, some of whom were new or had not met with a steward or activist since joining CWA.

Some workers were skeptical at first, but local organizers worked hard to build a relationship with them, answering their questions and providing information. After several visits and conversations about the benefits of membership, workers

signed up. CWA membership at the stores is now over 85 percent.

"Passing out literature is useful to educate non-members, but what really matters is making human contact and talking with people face to face," Ramirez said.

In Florida, District 3 locals also are reaching out to non-members at AT&T Mobility. In Jacksonville, CWA membership at the area's 14 AT&T Mobility retail stores is now over 70 percent, up from 30 percent, thanks to Local 3106 and organizers Floyd Carroll and Deb Ricketson.

Carroll and Ricketson spent months visiting workers at the

stores and meeting with them after working hours. "We have to build our union and increase union density at our represented employers," says Carroll. "If we don't grow, our power at the bargaining table will diminish."

In North Carolina, Local 3683's internal organizing efforts at Windstream over the last year enabled the union to stop management from weakening the bargaining unit by targeting union members for buyouts.

"Signing up non-members was the only way we could maintain our strength, so that's what we did,"



said local president Don Tyner. "Our members are spread out widely, so we moved our union meeting each month to a different location to reach as many people as possible."

Tyner would drive two hours or more to meet with workers and talked about the consequences of having fewer union members at Windstream. "You have to keep workers informed of what's happen-

ing at their company and in their industry. It's a matter of their livelihood," he said.

Close to 95 percent of the local's Windstream bargaining unit is organized as result of the local's internal organizing, and CWAers were able to easily beat a management-orchestrated decertification election to vote out the union last year.

CWA Builds Global Support For T-Mobile Workers

T-Mobile and parent company Deutsche Telekom are global operations. So CWA has been pursuing a global strategy to make sure T-Mobile USA workers get the union voice they want.

Deutsche Telekom is very positive about its productive relationship with ver.di, the union representing German workers at T-Mobile and other companies. But it allows T-Mobile USA to intimidate, harass and even fire workers who want a CWA voice. T-Mobile USA workers are warned by managers not to take a union leaflet, because workers and organizers are being watched. That behavior wouldn't be tolerated in Germany.

A year ago, CWA and ver.di announced the formation of TU, a union to represent T-Mobile workers in Germany and the United States.



Above, ver.di gives big coverage to the campaign for fairness at T-Mobile. CWA President Larry Cohen and ver.di Executive Board member Lothar Schröder outline the TU global union at UNI forum.

Since then, the campaign has taken off, with ver.di leaders and members pushing DT hard to end its double standard for T-Mobile USA and German workers.

At the UNI Congress in Nagasaki, Japan, CWA President Larry Cohen and ver.di Executive Board member Lothar Schröder described the joint activities that ver.di and CWA have conducted over the past year, and outlined more of the campaign to come. The project has caught on strong among ver.di members: More than 50 ver.di members leafleted outside the DT annual meeting last May, and ver.di leaders and members leafleted outside call centers in Richmond, Va., Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and other locations. At a workers' meeting in Bochum, Germany, 2,000 customer service employees stood to show solidarity with their T-Mobile USA counterparts.

Unions worldwide have been visiting German embassies in their home countries to express concern

about DT's double standard when it comes to workers' rights. The German government is a major shareholder in DT and is influential in the company's operations. Most recently, union delegations in Italy, Cameroon and Costa Rica met with German embassy officials in their home countries.

Customer service workers around the world, including CWAers at the customer service professionals conference, sent thousands of postcards to DT CEO Rene Obermann, calling for fairness and bargaining rights for T-Mobile workers worldwide.

CWAers have been leafleting outside T-Mobile retail stores and call centers in Texas, California and other states, and have been meeting with store employees to provide information and answer questions.

The campaign also focuses on investors. Most recently, the Treasurer of the state of Pennsylvania, Robert McCord, expressed his concerns to Obermann. McCord invests



Pennsylvania's \$80 billion in assets, including state employee pension funds, and some of those funds are directly invested in Deutsche Telekom. McCord wrote: "I am also worried that the market value of T-Mobile may be adversely affected by poor labor relations. What might result from a disenfranchised workforce and the associated negative publicity for T-Mobile?"

With an active legislative strategy, CWA also won the support of nearly every Democratic member of the House Education and Labor Committee, plus seven Republican members of Congress, who signed letters to Obermann calling on the company to respect workers' rights in the United States.

T-Mobile USA is the fourth largest wireless company, with about 20,000 workers eligible for union representation. T-Mobile uses the same kind of tactics as Verizon, which permitted Verizon Wireless to intimidate and fire union supporters and shut down centers where workers wanted a CWA voice. CWA represents about 42,000 workers at AT&T Mobility.

Read more at www.loweringthebarforus.org.



Participants at the UNI global forum show solidarity and support for TU and T-Mobile workers.

CenturyLink/Qwest:

Workers Organizing to Meet Challenges of Merger

Good paying jobs, strong contracts, and access to the jobs of the future are big issues for CWAers at CenturyLink, the company formed by the acquisition between CenturyLink and Qwest Communications.

There are about 14,000 CWA-represented workers at Qwest and 3,700 at Century Link. About 20,000 Century Link workers have no union representation. The CWA-represented CenturyLink workers worked for Century Tel and Embarq, formerly the local telephone division of Sprint.

“Organizing is the only way that we are going to protect what we’ve fought for and to secure a future for

Building our union's strength at the new company is the only way to increase our leverage at the bargaining table so we protect what we have.

CWA members at the company, said CWA Local 4370 President Harry Williamson. Local 4370 in Lorain, Ohio, organized CWA's first Century Link unit in 1978 and has fought the company's efforts to outsource jobs.

“Management will try to move as many jobs as it can to the non-union parts of the new company,”

said CWA Executive Vice President Annie Hill. “All call center work at Qwest is now done by CWA members. At Century Link, just 10 percent of call center workers have union representation.”

CWAers at Qwest say organizing is critical to maintaining their bene-

fits following the merger.

“Maintaining our health care is a huge issue with members,” said Local 7906 President Ken Saether, whose local represents 400 workers at Qwest and 75 at CenturyLink in Oregon. Management must negotiate changes in health care and other

benefits at Qwest. That's not the case at CenturyLink.

“The company will do everything in its power to try to dilute our heavily-organized Qwest bargaining units through attrition, or by transferring jobs to non-union parts of the new company,” said Saether.

“That's why organizing at CenturyLink is so important.”

“Building our union's strength at the new company is the only way to increase our leverage at the bargaining table so that we protect what we have,” Hill said.

Building Bargaining Power At AT&T Mobility

This year, hundreds more AT&T Mobility workers have won a CWA voice, and that builds our union's bargaining power.

In Puerto Rico, another 376 retail store and sales support workers won representation by CWA Local 3010 through majority sign up. The former Centennial Wireless workers join another 350 workers from the former Centennial Wireless in Puerto Rico who have won a CWA voice this year. In an intense campaign, CWA Local 3010 organizers and activists visited more than 20 stores and locations across the island.

Securing good health care benefits and the ability to take work breaks were among the workers' top issues, said local organizer Javier Sepulveda. “They wanted to know

how CWA could help them, and we got the message across effectively by having members from AT&T talk with them,” he said.

A key part of the campaign's success was maintaining one-on-one contact, listening to workers' concerns, and letting them know the value of a collective bargaining agreement, said District 3 Staff Representative Jorge Rodriguez who led the campaign.

Volunteer local union stewards Melvin Nazario, Rolando Hernandez and Elix Morales met with activists regularly to help them build worker support.

“Organizing is a duty for all local unions,” said Local President Rafael Castro-Torres. “It is what we must do to grow our union and is the only way to create better contracts and a

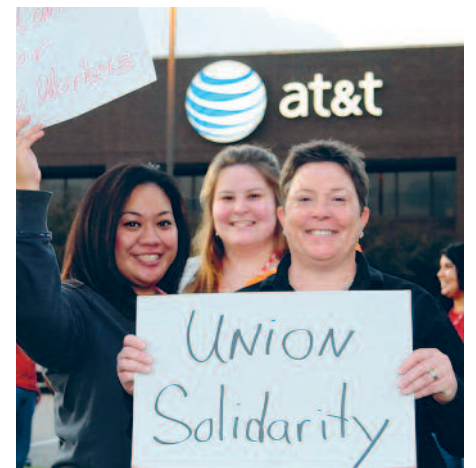
stronger labor movement.”

Also this year, in separate campaigns in Alabama, Indiana, and Michigan, some 350 AT&T Mobility workers from Centennial joined CWA through majority sign up. They joined technicians and other Mobility workers from Alabama, Idaho and Washington in getting a CWA voice and strong representation.

CWA represents about 42,000 workers at AT&T Mobility, nearly 100 percent of all workers eligible for union representation. That proves two important points: 1) that workers want a union voice, but don't want to endure a crushing campaign of harassment and intimidation from their employers to get it, and 2) that

majority sign up works.

CWA first negotiated a majority sign up and neutrality agreement with Southwestern Bell Mobile in the late 1980s that became the model for CWA agreements at Cingular Wireless, AT&T Mobility and other AT&T companies.



Members at AT&T Mobility across the country are talking one-on-one with co-workers to build bargaining power.

Denver SuperShuttle Drivers Organizing for Dignity

We came to America for opportunity and to escape oppression,” says Abdi Buni, a taxi driver and organizer with CWA Local 7777. “That's why I am helping SuperShuttle drivers at Denver International Airport (DIA) get a union like I did.”

Buni understands what the drivers are going through at SuperShuttle, a shared-ride taxi van service operating at Denver and other airports nationwide. In 2006, he led a successful campaign to win CWA representation for himself and 260 other taxi drivers at Denver International Airport.

The owner, a French-owned multinational, Veolia, uses its control over SuperShuttle's 94 drivers, mostly African immigrants, to squeeze them of nearly every dollar.

SuperShuttle drivers at the Denver airport typically work a 60-hour week, but they clear little more

than the minimum wage after spending nearly \$400 a week for SuperShuttle's vehicle lease, insurance, and company franchise fee. In addition, workers pay all vehicle maintenance costs plus gasoline,

and the employers' share and their own of social security taxes.

When all is said and done, the drivers say that they don't clear much more than about \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year, much of which is



Union Taxi driver Abdi Buni, an organizer with CWA Local 7777, is helping organize SuperShuttle drivers at Denver International Airport. He and his co-workers organized with CWA in 2006 and formed Union Taxi.

heavily dependent on tips. “The drivers work under a modern day form of indentured servitude,” said District 7 organizing coordinator Al Kogler who is working with Buni in helping the workers organize. “I have never seen such terrible treatment by an employer.”

SuperShuttle tried to block the drivers from forming a union by claiming they were “independent contractors” but the National Labor Relations Board didn't buy it, ruling that the claim was ridiculous given the amount of control the company exerts over the workers.

The company put GPS devices in the vans to keep close tabs on the workers, and pick up times are scheduled so tightly that drivers often don't have the time for bathroom breaks. Management writes drivers up for missing or declining a fare, and even being out of uniform.

The company also puts phony

passengers in the vans to spy on drivers and puts pressure on them to work tremendous amount of overtime.

The workers also encounter disrespectful and often racist treatment. While at Yellow Cab, which is owned and operated by the same company, Buni and his co-workers got an ugly “monkey come, monkey goes,” or “Mohammed comes, Mohammed goes,” response when they were told by a manager that they could leave if they didn't like working at the company.

“You can only take so much,” Buni says.

Fed up with the mistreatment, Buni and the drivers severed ties with Veolia and formed their own company, Union Taxi, where drivers are truly independent contractors who can earn a decent living. They also give a 15 percent discount to passengers who are union members.

Piedmont Agents Vote 'CWA Yes'

The 3,000 fleet and passenger service agents at Piedmont Airlines have a CWA voice, after overwhelmingly voting "CWA yes" in the National Mediation Board election.

The agents were the only major group at Piedmont without union representation. Now agents will vote on bargaining goals, elect their bargaining team and negotiate with management over wages, working conditions and other benefits. Key issues in the campaign were job security, unfair and arbitrary treatment and the lack of a grievance process.

"I feel relieved that I will actually be able to go into work and have representation. Favoritism is on its way out!" said Brad Kirby, an agent in Charlotte, N.C. "It's been a long time coming, and it's NICE, NICE, NICE," said Angie Dickenson, another Charlotte-based agent.

For some agents, the victory capped an eight-year fight for a union voice.

"Management is always making up new rules for us but there are never any rules for them and how they treat us," said ramp agents Robert Puig and Hopeton Smith who work at New York's LaGuardia Airport. "That's going to change now that we have a union."

CWA President Larry Cohen said the campaign was a big victory for workers' bargaining and organizing rights. "Piedmont and parent company US Airways used every anti-union trick in the book to keep workers from voting 'CWA Yes.' Management held forced captive audience meetings, had supervisors tear up union materials and harass union supporters, and even hired a notorious union-busting company that promised management results 'or your money back.'

"It's outrageous that most union elections are conducted this way in the United States. Piedmont agents stood up to this intimidation and won their union."

Voting took place under new election rules set by the NMB that ensured that airline elections would be conducted following the same democratic rules that govern elections in the United States. Testimony and other action by AFA-CWA, CWA and airline workers convinced the NMB to implement the fair election rule in June.

CWA represents more than 60,000 employees in the airline industry, including passenger service agents at US Airways and some 50,000 flight attendants, members of AFA-CWA. Agents at American Airlines



Piedmont agents voted overwhelmingly for CWA representation in November, capping an eight-year fight to get a union voice.

and American Eagle are working to win CWA representation now.

CWA local union leaders and activists, along with organizers from

states up and down the East Coast and Midwest, worked with the agents throughout the campaign.



American and Eagle Agents Know A Union Makes a Difference

Boyed by Piedmont agents' successful campaign to win a CWA voice, 12,000 passenger service agents at American Airlines and American Eagle are building support among their co-workers for CWA representation.

At American, big issues for the 9,300 gate, ticket and reservations agents are job security and a real grievance procedure that supports agents who are working at high-pressure jobs in a high-pressure industry.

Agents report that customer complaints have risen dramatically recently, often in response to airline or Federal Aviation Administration rules that allow no deviation. But agents, the front line of customer service, remain the focus of complaints. In some cases, agents are told that three complaint letters, whether justified or not, could result in discipline including termination. The non-union agents have no right to a representative present during any disciplinary hearing.

"I support a union because I want someone on my side when I need it," said Nancy Bevacqua, an agent in Columbus, Ohio. Carol Dotman, an agent in Raleigh, N.C.,

American Eagle agents from Lawton (Oklahoma) Municipal Airport, and many others, say a union would resolve problems of favoritism and arbitrary treatment. Eagle agents want a fair process to settle grievances and disputes with management. Pictured are Royalin Melton, Christopher Ruiz, Elizabeth Abarca, and Darrin Carwright.



said "a union is a necessity for job security and fairness in enforcing policies and procedures."

Reservations agents also want job security. Management says that reservations agents have location protection, except, that is, when they don't. Reservations agents were told by management that, "if you meet the requirements of location protection, you will not be forced to relocate." But the fine print says it all: "unless your city or department is closed or outsourced."

When reservations operations in 10 cities, from Albany, N.Y., to

Delta Flight Attendants Seek Rerun Election, AFA-CWA Files Interference Charges with NMB

Flight attendants at Delta Air Lines want a fair election, not one dominated by management interference, harassment and surveillance. The flight attendants came within 328 votes of winning a union voice at Delta. The vote was 9,216 for union representation and 9,544 for no union.

Submitting numerous reports from flight attendants about management harassment during the campaign, AFA-CWA filed charges with the National Mediation Board calling for a rerun election.

"Delta and Northwest flight attendants deserve the opportunity to freely participate in an election without being intimidated by management and heavy-handed efforts to keep them from gaining a voice," said AFA-CWA President Pat Friend.

When flight attendants, as required, logged in for their flight assignments, a screen popped up asking if they had voted and directed them to the NMB website to vote. "It's clear to us that Delta was tracking the voting," said AFA-CWA General Counsel Ed Gilmartin. "This kind of surveillance is a violation of the confidentiality and secret guarantee of the voting process under NMB rules," he said.

AFA-CWA flight attendant leaders from Northwest, which merged with Delta, and Delta flight attendants outlined other ways that management harassed and coerced flight attendants about their vote.

At a news teleconference, Delta flight attendants Mary Ellen Moore and Toni Weinfurter and AFA-CWA Northwest President Janette Rook and Vice President Daniel Grey said flight attendants were "inundated" with literature, banners, email and phone calls from Delta management. Some anti-AFA-CWA materials were even displayed on board aircraft.

They also said flight attendants were called by supervisors several times, not to talk about work schedules or job issues, but so that supervisors could deliver Delta's message about voting.

"Eight res offices have been closed and new home-based and reduced work week employees get few or no benefits."

"It's time to stop the 'flavor of the day' rules," said Eva Solis, an airport agent in Los Angeles. "Management has the power to do what they want, how they want, anytime they want. We need our rules and procedures spelled out in black and white and in simple English. It is time for a contract! A union will give us the power to negotiate."

At American Eagle, many agents, especially those at smaller stations, handle each flight from start to finish. "Depending on the station, we provide passenger service, ground services and cabin services work, including lavatory service and cleaning airplanes," said Royalin Melton, an agent in Lawton, Ok.

A contract would eliminate the favoritism and unfairness of local procedures, and would give Eagle agents a way to settle disputes, she said. "I take pride in my work. I want a process that we all can participate in and vote on that won't change unless we negotiate and approve any changes."

Burbank, Calif., were outsourced, agents with "location protection" suffered wage and benefit cuts.

When three more res centers were closed, agents were furloughed, forced to move to another location, or forced to work from home with severe cuts in pay and benefits and the loss of their pensions. "We need a union for job security and to have a say in our futures," says Regina Reed, a reservations agent in Dallas.

"There is always the threat of outsourcing," says Randy Madden, an airport agent in Dallas-Ft. Worth.

Organizing Doubles CWA Membership at Helena Labs

At Helena Laboratories in Beaumont, Texas, signing up new members has sometimes been tough. But Local 6139 has shown that persistence pays off. Through a concerted effort to build power at the bargaining table, this year, the local has doubled the number of CWAers at Helena to 203, raising membership to 54 percent of the unit.

"We made it our priority to let represented workers know who CWA is and what it really means for them," said local president Marc LaRousse who makes regular trips to the lab with local vice president

Calvin Carter. "Educating workers about how their new contract resulted in a double-digit wage increase made a big difference."

In the past, management tried to limit the local's access to workers and even escorted LaRousse and Carter from the property. So Local 6139 bargained new access in a new contract with Helena Labs. "To

get better access to the workers we represent, we needed to utilize every opportunity to have a role in the employer's new hire orientation," Carter said.

The local also worked to build a relationship with management. "They have a better understanding of how a union can be helpful," Carter said. "Our job is to protect



Meeting with workers and building rapport with management enabled Local 6139 to double membership at Helena Labs. Pictured: Vonda Gore, Labs employee and a local organizer, with local Vice President Calvin Carter, left, and President Marc LaRousse.

and represent employees, but we can get the word to a worker who might be having a problem on the job. This helps both the worker and the company, and the company gains because union input can prevent a situation from escalating to disciplinary action or termination."

Local 6139 credits Vonda Gore, a key member of the organizing team

and a Helena Labs worker, for building the union. During breaks and lunches, Gore meets with co-workers in her department and others to talk about the union and answer questions. "Having them hear from one of their co-workers about what persuaded me to join and get active in CWA makes a difference," she said.



Expanding Broadband Top Priority In CWA, Sierra Club Partnership

Rural Virginia County May Be First to Benefit from New Alliance

In a win-win-win proposition for workers, consumers and the environment, CWA and the Sierra Club are working together to ensure that all Americans have access to high-speed broadband networks.

The project, which has taken off in Virginia and is in the planning stages in Iowa, Nevada, North Carolina and Ohio, is the first of what leaders see as a future of shared goals and actions.

"CWA stands with the Sierra Club, the NAACP and the other members of 'One Nation' in the fight for good jobs, economic justice, sustainable communities and bargaining rights," CWA President Larry Cohen said. "Together, we speak with a powerful voice."

The Sierra Club-CWA partnership is built on the common goal of creating quality jobs and sustainable communities, with the buildout of high-speed broadband critical to that effort.

A key goal is to provide one giga-

byte of broadband service to anchor institutions, the schools, hospitals and public buildings in every community. Another priority is getting utility providers to use broadband for "smart grids" that allow consumers to more efficiently use power, saving energy and money.

In Virginia, CWA and Sierra Club leaders are working with Charles City County government officials. The county is largely rural with a predominately African-American population and a real "digital divide," where residents don't have access to the benefits of high speed Internet.

CWA Local 2201 Executive Vice President Richard Hatch and Virginia Sierra Club Director Glen Besa have had a series of meetings with Charles City County officials to explore ways to persuade Verizon to provide high speed broadband to public institutions and residents.

"Charles City County is the perfect example of a rural community that is right beside an urban area but is being left out while its big-city

neighbors get state-of-the-art Internet access," Hatch said. If the overtures to Verizon don't work, he said the CWA-Sierra alliance will reach out to citizens and the media to launch a full-scale campaign.

A Charles City County leader will join Cohen, Sierra Club leaders and FCC Commissioner Julius Genachowski at a Dec. 15 news conference on the need for high speed broadband buildout.

Besa said high-speed Internet means new tools for energy efficiency and fewer cars on the road as telecommuting increases. More broadly, he said, "We have a commitment to creating good, green,

In Virginia, state Sierra Club Director Glen Besa, left, and CWA Local 2201 EVP Richard Hatch are working with officials in Charles City County, outside Richmond, to bring broadband to the rural, largely African-American community.



union jobs with fair pay and benefits. The stronger the middle class, the better for the environment. When people are worried about where their next paycheck is coming from, the environment isn't as important to them."

Hatch and Besa are planning a joint training event in January for

Virginia CWA and Sierra activists. "When environmentalists talk with labor, we find out how much we have in common," Besa said. "There are differences in our specific agendas, but our opponents in the state legislature and political realm are generally the same."

CWA Presses Senate on Bargaining Rights for Public Safety Officers

The Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, S. 1611, which would provide collective bargaining rights for public safety officers, has bipartisan support and even a number of Republican Senator co-sponsors.

But so far, obstructionist tactics and Senate gridlock have kept this legislation from becoming law. CWA represents about 22,000 public safety officers, many in the 25 states that don't provide officers with collective bargaining rights.

CWA's Legislative Political Action Teams geared up right away in the post-election legislative session to

mobilize CWAers to call and write their Senators on this important measure. CWAers asked Senators to allow this bi-partisan bill to be brought to the floor for a "yes or no" vote in the closing weeks of the 111th Congress.

The House passed the bill in July, attached to a spending measure, but Senate Republicans threatened to filibuster that entire spending package unless the bargaining rights language was stripped out. In the Senate, the bill has been stalled by filibuster abuse time and again, despite having six Republican co-sponsors.

CWA President Larry Cohen has

said this legislation is an important goal for our entire union and is likely the only opportunity now to extend bargaining rights for workers.

Although Democrats will still control the Senate when the 112th Congress convenes in January, Republicans will control the House. And GOP leadership there "will never let this bill come up for a vote," said CWA Legislative Director Shane Larson. "That's why we need the Senate to act now."

Go to <http://cwa-union.org/pscb> to check the status of the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act.



CWA and Sierra Club activists and leaders met earlier this year at CWA headquarters to discuss shared goals, beginning with a joint push for expanding high-speed broadband access nationwide.

'Right to Know' Bill Could Save, Restore U.S. Call Center Jobs

If U.S. companies had to tell you they were transferring your customer service call overseas, would those employers think twice about offshoring their call centers?

That's the idea driving a call center "right to know" bill, long championed by CWA and sponsored by Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY). He is expected to introduce an updated version of the bill in the 112th Congress next year.

"If we want to put a stop to the offshoring of American jobs, then we need to provide incentives for American companies to keep American jobs here," Schumer said.

"This bill will not only serve to maintain call center jobs currently in the United States, but also provide a reason for companies that have already sent jobs overseas to bring them back."

When the bill is updated for the new Congress, it is expected to include right to know language for online chat support that is done overseas. That's because many companies now have pop-up boxes on their websites that offer instant messaging with a customer service representative.

To further discourage offshoring, CWA and Schumer's staff are exploring a possible excise tax on

companies for every call or chat transferred to foreign call centers. Also, U.S. companies would be required to disclose quarterly, and in their annual reports, how many customer service calls they received, and how many are sent overseas.

CWA leaders say saving American call center jobs benefits customers as well as workers. "Our

customer service professionals in telecom, the public sector, newspapers and at other employers have the training and experience to determine the best way to help their customers," CWA Executive Vice President Annie Hill said.

For those companies that still decide to offshore call centers, CWA is working to ensure that any call

center bill includes language protecting customers from identity theft and other security breaches. "We are looking at how U.S. privacy laws can be applied to foreign call centers, and how we can ensure that employees are screened and monitored," said CWA Legislative Director Shane Larson.

Growing Momentum To Fix Senate Rules

The campaign to reform the Senate rules is gaining ground and new supporters.

CWA is working as part of a coalition that includes Sierra Club, Common Cause, US Action, Progressive Congress.org and others.

More Senators are speaking out against restrictive holds and filibuster rules that keep the people's business from even being debated. Senators Tom Harkin (Iowa), Tom Udall (N.M.), Claire McCaskill (Missouri), Amy Klobuchar (Minnesota), Jeff Merkley (Oregon), Mark Udall (Colo.), Dan Coats (Sen.-Elect, Indiana) and others have been talking why we must fix the broken Senate.

In the past legislative session, the House passed more than 400 bills, many of which would have provided real support to working and middle class families. Because of the Senate rules that permit an individual Senator to block even discussion of legislation, the Senate remained stuck in gridlock, with obstructionists blocking important initiatives for working families, like restoring bargaining rights through the Employee Free Choice Act, ending tax breaks for corporations that move jobs overseas and stopping pay discrimination against women, among others.

And it's not just the filibuster that's a problem.

Holds, secret holds and threatened filibusters by Senators meant government agencies like the National Labor Relations Board couldn't do its job. The NLRB had just two members for nearly a year because of holds place on nominees to fill the remaining three seats. That has denied justice for thousands of workers who were illegally fired or

mistreated by employers.

CWA and allies are asking Senators to move forward on eight specific principles, including an end to destructive "secret holds," a reasonable opportunity for all Senators to express their views and a timely "yes or no" vote on every nomination and measure.

The Senate rules are not a part of the Constitution; they can be changed by Senators when the new Senate is sworn into office in early January.

Read more at www.fixthesenatenow.org.

CWA: Tax Changes a Big Priority In Post-Election Session

CWA and allies are fighting for some specific tax fixes that will help working and middle class families, and small business, as the 111th Congress finishes work for the year.

As the CWA News went to press, CWAers were pressing the U.S. Senate to close the corporate tax loophole known as the Reverse Morris Trust and to keep the tax cut for middle class and working families.

The Reverse Morris Trust loophole allows companies to structure the sale of assets to smaller companies to avoid paying taxes on the sale. Verizon took advantage of the tax loophole to sell landlines in New England to FairPoint Communications, to sell lines to Hawaiian Telecom and to spin off its Yellow Pages operations. All those buyers have



since filed for bankruptcy. Verizon used the loophole again to sell landlines in 14 states to Frontier Communications.

The House of Representatives voted to close the loophole earlier this year, but the Senate has yet to act.

CWA also is fighting for an extension of unemployment benefits for workers who have been jobless for more than six months. Some members of Congress are playing hardball with the emergency unemployment benefits of 5 million job-

less Americans, looking to force through a tax cut for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans in exchange for not letting the benefits run out.

The benefits average just \$290 a week. But the tax cut for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans will cost taxpayers \$700 billion.

CWA leaders also are pressing for quick actions on a package of tax cut extenders that has bipartisan support. These tax changes include aid for college and career training, small business job creation, continued access to Medicare and more.

Good Jobs Start With Union Training

Skill training offered at the IUE-CWA Service Center in Dayton, Ohio, has gotten rave reviews from employers and workers who were able to find quality jobs after graduating from the program.

The program is funded by a \$3.9 million Labor Department grant and provides training through the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council, the only nationally certified, industry-recognized program for front-line production workers.

The program offers instruction in the advanced manufacturing skills needed for a clean energy economy.

Ronald Caison of Tipp City, Ohio, said "I learned more in three weeks than people spending thousands of



Ronald Caison

dollars do in months. My supervisor told me he had never seen anyone who had walked into the job being able to do everything like I did."

Lee Gillis, featured in this ad in the Dayton Daily News, was the first graduate to be hired. He said that in a crowded interview room, when he showed his certificate to the interviewer "everything changed and they hired me."

For more information, go to www.iue-cwamssc.org.

'AFTER THE HR SUPERVISOR SAW MY CERTIFICATES, EVERYTHING CHANGED AND THEY HIRED ME.'



LOOKING FOR A GOOD JOB? START HERE, IN DAYTON.

The government's economic stimulus plan is providing free advanced production and green manufacturing skill training to Ohio residents.

Certified graduates are twice as likely to pass employer entrance exams and many graduates already have gotten good jobs.

"When you get the (training) certificates, what you get is someone well-rounded with a view of the whole manufacturing process."

— MSSC Graduate Lee Gillis

So don't wait any longer. Call 937-253-3565 or go to www.iue-cwamssc.org for more information. Training facilities are located at the IUE-CWA Service Center, South Jefferson St., in Dayton.

IUE-CWA CWA