

Verizon workers circulate petition opposing CWA end of strike order

Our reporter
30 May 2016

The WSWS Verizon Strike Newsletter is holding a call-in information al meeting on Monday, May 30 , at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time. To participate, call 213-416-1560 and enter PIN 581 991 086#.

Verizon workers have begun circulating a petition to oppose the back-to-work order by the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). The two unions, which announced “an agreement in principle” with Verizon on Friday, are trying to end the month-and-a-half walkout by 40,000 workers and send them back to work without having a chance to read, let alone vote on, a contract.

The petition was proposed and agreed to at a call-in meeting organized by the *WSWS Verizon Strike Newsletter* on Sunday night, which was attended by more than 150 workers from throughout the eastern US states.

The petition states, “We have no information about the ‘agreement in principle’ and its impact on our health care and other terms we will have to work under for the next four years.” It calls the circumstances under which the return to work order was issued “highly suspicious”: “We were informed of this agreement over the Memorial Day weekend when many workers were gone and when we had no opportunity to discuss it on the picket line. It also comes just as the strike would be strengthened by our eligibility to receive unemployment benefits, which will be cancelled if we return to work.”

The petition concludes by demanding: “The return to work order must be rescinded pending the holding of membership meetings where the full details of a contract are distributed and a democratic vote is taken.”

Many Verizon workers signing the petition have left comments. Below is a selection.

Dennis, from New York: “After many months of working without a contract and going on strike because of said reason, why should we now return without seeing and agreeing to a contract?”

John, from Lancaster, Pennsylvania: “We have been fooled before. We need to see a contract, and ratify it prior to return to work. I also disagree with the removal of overtime caps. I thought Verizon had no trouble with the workload?”

Andrew, from Haledon, New Jersey: “This is basically going back to work without a contract so the company and government don’t have 39,000 people collecting unemployment insurance. What’s another week or two of unpaid bills versus knowing what we are signing into?”

Ryan, from Baltimore, Maryland: “We need to see more details on what’s been agreed upon. Issues such as family health care increase, forced relocation, ‘temporary’ assignments, forced overtime, and work place safety committee to name a few.”

Alexandra, from the Bronx, New York: “I have faith in my bargaining team, but the secrecy of this offer and the fact that picketing was terminated while the details of the contract are still being drawn is suspicious. I believe we have a right after over 45 days of struggle and all of the underhanded moves the company has displayed to review the details prior to return to work.”

Eric, from Buffalo, New York: “Why are we not being shown this ‘amazing agreement’? Have we learned nothing from 2011? Obviously not. There should be *no* return to work until the membership have seen, voted, and ratified, this deal. Why do I get the feeling that my union brothers, our families, and myself, have been used as pawns in order for CWA to gain more dues paying members? Right when the strike is really starting to make an impact, we capitulate.”

Jeff, from Brooklyn: “Please let us see the contract and have every member vote on it before returning to work like cattle.”

JP, from New Providence, Rhode Island: “I guess we are just useful idiots. From what I can see the only party that will benefit from this contract is the union not the workers. The union will be getting more warm bodies to pay dues. We will end up with no raise or even a net loss. We went on strike for about seven weeks for no substantial change in the contract? We could have worked without a contract and had the same results. Now we are all \$5k+ poorer. Nice job CWA! I will be voting no!”

Mark: “We have a right to see this contract after what we have already sacrificed before returning to work. You are supposed to represent us ... how do you represent people that are being kept in the dark? In this information age, it shouldn’t be too hard to provide this information immediately and not a one or two page condensed version.”

The petition can be read and signed [here](#) .



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact