# Communications

**Workers of America**

**District 7**

AFL-CIO, CLC

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**Via Email**

**Q-266**

**August 19, 2019**

**TO:** All CWA Local Presidents Representing Legacy Qwest Members

**FROM:** CWA Bargaining Committee

**SUBJECT:** Tentative Agreement

Your CWA Bargaining Committee met July 13-16, 2019 with CenturyLink. We spent many hours reviewing healthcare data and wages. When we entered into early limited negotiations, we knew we had a limited amount of time together to address issues. Both sides brought multiple issues to the table. The Company came to the table with regressive proposals in regards to tuition assistance, pension, and healthcare. We reached a point where only healthcare and wages were on the table.

Based on the many conversations we had during the week; we feel that bringing this offer to the members is the right thing to do. If we go to full blown bargaining in 2020 the entire contract is open, what we would gain and loose is unknown. Our vacation, sick time and all other economic options would be open for negotiations and where we would land is unknown.

We kept our job security language. We still have layoffs by seniority, successorship, no layoffs if contractors on the payroll, the 20% cap on contracting, the call sharing language. These are protections not found in most contracts. We proposed neutrality but the Company would not agree to our proposal. The good news is we already have an organizing campaign focused on the non-represented and engineers at CenturyLink. We are slowly making progress there.

We had negotiated health care rates in the 2017 limited bargaining. We had set rates through 2020. Our healthcare was due to increase January 1, 2020. When we negotiated the rates in 2017 the trend in health care rates was rising at 10.8% for our pool of participants, and that was reflected in our rates.

In reviewing data for the future, we realized we are in a pool of employees of about 8,400. Our rates are determined on the total claims paid in our pool. The Standard Plan for CenturyLink has a pool of about 26,000 employees. Their rates have not gone up in 2 years. It became clear to us that we would be in a better place if we were part of a larger pool to share claims with. The only way to join that population was to join the plan design and premium payments of the Standard plans offered to other CenturyLink employees. By doing this, our previously negotiated rates for 2020 would change, and for the majority would be less. (Attached are the previously negotiated rates and the new tentatively agreed to rates, as well as plan design.)

By joining their plan our plan design changes, we will have the option of the Premium CDHP, the Standard CDHP, and the High Deductible HDHP. (From our understanding another option will be rolled out in the future, which gives our members another choice) Attached are the plan design details.

In the years of 2021, 2022 & 2023 claims will be reviewed and then the rates will be set. It is a big change to move out of our negotiated set rates, but it was clear to the bargaining committee that to keeps rates low we needed to join the larger populations’ pool. We reviewed the rates of remaining separate and the increases were more than we could justify paying.

We will be receiving the following wage increases:

 June 14, 2020 3%

 June 13, 2021 2.5%

 June 12, 2022 2.5%

In Arizona, the Company and Union will meet to implement the provisions of the Arizona Fair Wages & Healthy Families Act by January 1, 2020.

If the tentative agreement is ratified the new expiration of the contract will be April 1, 2023.

Considering the amount of issues that could be open in full negations we feel that protecting what we have is the best for our members and we present this tentative agreement to the members for a vote, the committee recommends a yes vote.

Susie McAllister, CWA Chair Jeremiah Clever, Local 7603

Lisa Avila, CWA Co-Chair Jake Williams, Local 7804
Valerie Packer, Local 7621 Gregg Sherwood, Local 7777

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

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Attachment

C: Staff