

Getting the Facts Straight

Health Care Reform Financing...

With the passage of the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act the decades-long struggle to make health care accessible, affordable and available to all has been achieved. But numerous media sources, at the beckoning of large corporations, have been on the attack with unfounded allegations on funding of this new legislation.

Here are the facts: Employers will be required to report the value of the health plan on workers' W-2s. That is it. The worker is not taxed for the value of the plan. Of course, there are new taxes to fund health care reform. Here is the list:

\$210 billion from Medicare Taxes applied to high-income earners (those earning more than \$200,000 single or \$250,000 married). There is a slight bump (0.9%) in the Medicare tax for income in excess of those amounts, and, for the first time, the Medicare tax will be applied to unearned income, like dividends, royalties, rents, and interest income for those in these ultra-high income brackets.

\$107 billion from taxes and fees assessed on drug companies, medical device manufacturers and health insurance companies.

\$52 billion from a penalty assessed against employers who don't provide health insurance.

\$32 billion from the excise tax on high-cost health plans (note this tax is on the plan or plan sponsor; not on people covered by the plan).

\$17 from individuals who do not have health insurance.

\$5 billion from a tax change in the Medicare drug subsidy provided to employers who offer retiree drug coverage.

\$3 billion from an excise tax on tanning salons.

While we don't like the excise tax on health plans and we don't like the change to Medicare Part D subsidy, these taxes are not assessed against individuals or families. It can be truly said that this health care reform bill is financed progressively. Almost half the financing comes from taxes on the wealthiest Americans and the next biggest source of financing is the health care industry itself, which has been among the most profitable industries in the country.

Local 2108 Conducts New Stewards Training



New stewards training was conducted May 18-20, 2010 at Local 2108. Congratulations to our newest stewards as they take their training into the workplace to assist members on day to day issues. (pictured above) Stacey Fulford, Hafeeza Shabazz, Kyle Shanholtz, Adrian Johnson, Andre' Brooks, Chanon Davis, James Epperson, Perry Henderson, Terris Squires, Lois Alexander, John Blacknall, Eurasia Butler, Leslie Lockhart and Weather McGraw. **Instructors:** Latasha Carpenter and Micki Wade.

West Virginia PSC Approves Verizon Landline Sale to Frontier

The state Public Service Commission on May 13th approved Verizon's plan to sell off its telephone landlines to Frontier Communications in West Virginia -- exactly a year after the companies announced the \$8.6 billion deal.

The three-member commission concluded that the sale's benefits outweigh potential risks.

West Virginia becomes the last of 14 states to sign off on the sale. Frontier expects to pick up 547,000 residential and small-business customers from Verizon across the state.

The companies hope to complete the sale by June 30, pending final approval from the Federal Communications Commission. Verizon has said it wants to shed its landline operations to focus on wireless and broadband services.

Samford, Conn.-based Frontier has promised to expand high-speed Internet service in West Virginia and open a Southeast regional headquarters in Charleston.

The PSC's approval came with multiple conditions, including a requirement that Frontier spend \$231 million over the next three years on landline improvements.

Earlier this week, the PSC ordered Verizon to set aside \$72.4 million over the next four years to improve landline service. Verizon is reviewing the decision.

The Communications Workers of America and the PSC's Consumer Advocate Division opposed the Verizon-Frontier sale, saying Frontier would take on too much debt and struggle to keep its promises. For months, the union has railed against the deal in television commercials and full-page newspaper advertisements. Union leaders say Frontier is too small and won't be able to operate Verizon's expansive landline operations successfully.

In recent years, Verizon has sold off its landlines in other states to smaller companies that have since filed for bankruptcy.

Verizon's 2,100 employees in West Virginia will become Frontier workers. Frontier plans to spend \$200 million in West Virginia to improve the state's landline network, and another \$48 million to increase broadband availability during the next three years.

Frontier has pledged to honor existing labor agreements and not lay off any technicians and installers for at least 18 months.

Although Frontier has promised to open a regional headquarters in Charleston and add 40 management jobs, CWA predicts Frontier will shift many customer support jobs to offices in other states, resulting in a "net job loss" after the sale.

The Communications Workers of America said today they are weighing their options after the announcement of the approval by the West Virginia Public Service Commission of the sale of the Verizon's phone lines in the state to Frontier Communications.

"We're in the process of evaluating the order," said CWA District 2 Vice-President Ron Collins. "After full review we'll look at what we can do that will best serve West Virginia consumers and CWA members."

AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards

Friday, June 25, 2010

Baltimore Orioles

-VS-

Washington Nationals

Game Time—7:05 pm

Tickets: \$6.00 Per Person—Sold on a first come, first serve basis.

Join CWA Local 2108 at Orioles Park at Camden Yards this summer as the Orioles take on The Washington Nationals. There will be fireworks presented after the ballgame. To order your tickets call the local office on 301-595-2108. See you at the yard !!

We've seen long-term employees, good people who, under stressful conditions, make poor decisions. Ultimately we all feel pressure to perform and to produce solid results. Whatever strategies you choose to employ to achieve positive results, please don't let the manipulation of productivity records be among the choices. It is a short-term strategy destined to fail.

Michael A. Mason
Verizon Chief Security Officer

Now you are probably asking yourself right now, "Why in the hell is he quoting the Verizon Chief Security Officer!?" I don't blame you. OK, here's the deal. When I read the latest Security Review for May 2010 I was astonished to find half of the front page filled with a missive about the importance of not manipulating productivity results. Mr. Mason went so far as to say, and I quote; "Manipulating productivity results is the proverbial "house of cards" and in time, that house will inevitably collapse on itself with catastrophic results for those involved."

The following letter is my response to Mr. Mason.

Dear Michael Mason:

Here is the thing. Verizon has been steadily building that house of cards for several years now. The bean counters took over somewhere along the way and started dictating to the operations people just how much productivity they had to have in order to stay within the budgets they were allocated.

The operations people who came up through the ranks and knew how to do the jobs they managed pushed back. They knew what was being asked of them was unrealistic. They knew the only possible way to achieve those results was to "create" them. Many of them refused to do it. Most of the managers no longer work here.

Verizon upper management began preparing for this several years ago when they purposely began hiring people directly into management who had a college degree but no experience in the jobs they were managing. The company created such a high stress workplace that most of the decent managers didn't stay.

The ones who survived learned the only way to make it was to continually ask "how high?" when told by the bean counters to jump through the productivity hoop.

As Chief of Security, I can only assume you rose to that position because of your abilities. From what I know about Verizon Security they are very good at investigating. As the head of security I assume your investigative skills are better than anyone else's. Here is my challenge to you.

This organization is rotten from the top down when it comes to false productivity numbers. When the Generals in the Army have a corrupt plan you shouldn't go after the foot soldier who is just following orders. If you want to fix the problem, you go after the source.

The source in this case is the corporate officers at Verizon who look the other way everyday while unrealistic results are demanded. They hand down edicts about productivity results and don't give a rats tail about how they are achieved.

You need to investigate if it is really possible to achieve the productivity results the bean counters are asking for. Don't go after the people, go after the process.

After you do that, you need to go after the people who pushed for such unrealistic results. Those are the people you need to punish.

I know what you are going to say. The Verizon Business Code of Conduct doesn't excuse anyone who violates the code, even at the behest of higher management. The problem with that, Mr. Mason, is many of the people who refused to commit the violations are no longer employed here. Ironically, they were fired for refusing to violate the Code of Conduct!

So begin your investigation with Ivan or Denny and work your way down from there. Ask them to show how it is possible to achieve the results they are asking for without manipulating the numbers. Then put the results of your investigation in the Security Review.

When you expose what a house of cards they have built, perhaps we can get back to building a business with realistic objectives and a solid foundation.

I look forward to reading that issue of the Security Review.

Sincerely,

Les Evans



Communications Workers of America Local 2108

2108News

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- Johnny Brown Secretary-Treasurer
- Marilyn Irwin Vice President
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Recording Announcements

- Verizon (301) 595-1824
- VCSI (301) 595-1826
- Avaya (301) 595-1834
- Idearc (301) 595-3072



“Back-Up Care” Option No Longer Available

The ACFC has notified CWA that the “Back-Up Care” program has been discontinued for Verizon employees, effective immediately. Members can still call VZ-Life on 1-800-845-0632 to get information on camps, nanny organizations, etc., for summer care options.

CWA Announces New “COPE” Contest



CWA has started a new COPE contest running from May 1 through October 26, 2010. There are many important elections coming up throughout our District during the next year and it is important that we elect candidates who support

working families and legislation that helps working families. Money continues to be a major force in political campaigns. These voluntary contributions help keep our union and our union movement strong.

Please contact the Local on 301-595-2108 or your Chief Steward to sign up for COPE. Anyone who contributes a minimum of \$1.00 per week will receive a t-shirt and be entered into a contest to win a trip to Las Vegas for two. Members who already contribute to COPE will also receive a t-shirt and be entered in the contest if they increase their COPE contribution by at least \$1.00 per week.

Funded by the voluntary contributions of CWA members, their family members and retirees, CWA-COPE provides financial contributions to worker-friendly candidates. CWA can only use voluntary dollars to contribute to an endorsed candidate for federal office. No union dues money of any kind can be given to a political candidate for federal office or national political party.

CWA-COPE also provides information to union families about the candidates and their positions on the issues affecting their lives. Decent health care, overtime pay, safe working conditions, family-friendly workplaces, retirement security, and freedom to organize are among the concerns influenced by the political process. CWA-COPE endorses candidates (regardless of political party) who support working families.

Personals :

We wish to extend sincere sympathy to the family and friends of:

- Luther McKinney, father of **Lana McKinney**, who died on February 9, 2010.
- Alise Thompson Moye, grandmother of **Denise Thompson** who died on February 11, 2010.
- Florence Britton Wilson, grandmother of **Mark Wilson**, who died on March 1, 2010.
- Arnold Lucious Wilson, father of **Mark Wilson**, who died April 3, 2010.
- Edward Brian Wright, brother of **Virginia L. Wright**, who died April 13, 2010.
- Robert F. Myers Jr., father of **Daniel Myers**, who died April 14, 2010.
- Garnet G. Vintes, father of **Shellyn Vintes-Edley**, who died on April 29, 2010.
- Lauren Williams, niece of **Ingrid Edwards** who died on April 29, 2010.
- Thomas Wayne Vitko, brother of **Theresa McChesney** who died on May 3, 2010.
- Thomas M. Chestlo, father of **Sherri & Thomas J. Chestlo**, who died May 6, 2010.
- Emma Corinthian-Johnson, grandmother of **LaTasha Carpenter**, who died on May 12, 2010.
- Frank Eugene Stanek, father of **Robert Stanek**, who died May 17, 2010.
- Erika Smith, daughter of retired member **Laurel Smith** who died on May 20, 2010.
- William “Bill” Macker, father-in-law of **Wayne Jaquith** who died on May 22, 2010.

Welcome New Members

Transferred

Al Muie:

- Michele Travers
- Mary Grice
- Joseph Klemkowski
- Priscilla Rollins
- Brenda Faison



2010 CWA LOCAL 2108 SCHOLARSHIP GRANT

CWA Local 2108 is proud to offer scholarships to our members and their families. Please read the rules below, and call the Local if you have additional questions.

1. Three \$2,000 scholarships are available
2. Available to members in good standing since last negotiated contract, their spouse and dependent children or dependent children of deceased members.
3. \$1,000 will be mailed directly to the institution per semester
4. Student must take at least 9 credits per semester.
5. Must have a letter of acceptance from the college or accredited learning institution with application.
6. Drawing at July membership meeting as a raffle.
7. Community Service Committee will screen applications.
8. Applications must be postmarked by June 30 of the current year.
9. Resignation from the union will forfeit scholarship awards.

NAME: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER _____ SCHOOL ATTENDING _____

ADDRESS _____ HOME NUMBER _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ WORK NUMBER _____

Retirees Corner



RMC 2108

Last month's meeting was well attended, and it was suggested the we have speakers to explain the rules and any changes to Social Security and Medicare at future meetings .We will have this scheduled as soon as possible. This will be helpful to retirees who have not used these services .We will continue to have information on legislative changes at our meetings that affect retirees on an ongoing basis. The lunch at this meeting was fantastic. A special thanks to our volunteers who prepared everything. This is always a great way to enjoy time with friends.

The Meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 11:00am . See you there.

Calvin C Foster Jr - President RMC 2108

AFL-CIO Night at Nationals Park

Friday, July 9, 2010

Washington Nationals

-vs-

San Francisco Giants

Game Time - 7:05 pm



Tickets: \$10.00 Per Person - Sold on a first come, first serve basis.

Join CWA Local 2108 at Nationals Park this summer as the Nats take on The San Francisco Giants. Ticket proceeds to benefit the Community Services Agency of the AFL-CIO. To order your tickets call the local office on 301-595-2108.

JUNE 2010

- 2 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
2 Finance Committee Meeting - 4:30pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9 Retired Members Chapter Meeting, 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
20 Father's Day
25 AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards - 7:05pm
Baltimore Orioles - vs - Washington Nationals

JULY 2010

- 5 Independence Day Holiday (observed)
Local Office Closed
7 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
9 AFL-CIO Night at Nationals Park - 7:05pm
Washington Nationals - vs - San Francisco Giants
14 Retired Members Chapter Meeting, 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
14 Membership Meeting 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
26-28 CWA Annual Convention
Washington, DC
28-30 CWA Legislative Conference
Washington, DC

SAVE THE DATES: June 9 - Membership Meeting, Local Office - 6:00pm; June 25 - AFL-CIO Night at Camden Yards, O's - vs - Nats - 7:05pm

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