

## Legislative Updates

### The PRO Act

CWA and 40 other organizations launched the Worker Power Coalition to push for the Senate to pass the PRO Act. New polling from the coalition shows overwhelming support for the PRO Act in states that are political battlegrounds or otherwise important to secure majority support in the Senate for the PRO Act.

"It's time for the Senate to pass the PRO Act to give working people the tools they need to regain power at work," said CWA President Chris Shelton. "The PRO Act will impose serious penalties on corporations and CEOs that retaliate against workers who speak up to improve their working conditions and make it easier for workers to join together in unions to negotiate better pay and benefits and time off to spend with their families."

For more information on the coalition and the poll visit [passtheproact.org](https://passtheproact.org).



© CanStockPhoto.com

### CWA Endorses Terry McAuliffe for Virginia Governor



The Virginia State Council of the Communications Workers of America announced today that they have endorsed Terry McAuliffe for Governor.

"We reviewed the candidate's records closely and the decision was clear," said Steve Chambers, President of the CWA Virginia State Council and Executive Vice President of CWA Local 2201 in Richmond. "Terry McAuliffe is a proven leader who has focused on creating

jobs and making life better for working families in Virginia. He will help strengthen and expand public-sector collective bargaining in our state, get us to a \$15 minimum wage more quickly, and make sure Virginians are able to have paid time off when they are sick or need to care for family members."

"While Glenn Youngkin has been getting rich from sending jobs overseas, Terry McAuliffe has been bringing jobs to Virginia," said Ed Mooney, Vice President of CWA District 2-13. "We need Terry McAuliffe's leadership to keep Virginia on track for a strong recovery from the pandemic so working families thrive."

### NLRB General Counsel

Last month, the U.S. Senate confirmed Jennifer Abruzzo as the new

National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) General Counsel. Abruzzo, who was nominated by President Joe Biden for the post, served as the Special Counsel for Strategic Initiatives at CWA before her confirmation, and has many years of experience working for the NLRB in various roles, including Acting General Counsel and Deputy General Counsel.

The NLRB General Counsel plays a critical role in setting the agenda for the NLRB and determining which cases it will pursue. The Trump Administration's General Counsel, union-buster Peter Robb, cut the NLRB's budget, reduced staff, and implemented policies that made it more difficult for NLRB lawyers to investigate worker complaints and pursue unfair labor practice charges.

No Republican Senators supported Abruzzo's confirmation, resulting in a tie vote which was broken by Vice President Kamala Harris.



### CWA Launches 'Build Broadband Better' Campaign



Following the Biden Administration's recent support for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill which allocates \$65 billion towards broadband infrastructure, CWA launched the "Build Broadband Better" campaign to ensure that the funding results in affordable, reliable broadband for all Americans and creates good union jobs. CWA is investing in a public education campaign, six-figure TV and digital ad spend, and political action that includes the

deployment of its Broadband Brigade, made up of frontline broadband workers from across the country.

CWA's TV and digital ad campaign highlights the essential work of union employees in broadband deployment. The ad also calls on Congress to support broadband legislation that will expand connectivity for families nationwide. The union is pushing for provisions that would prohibit companies that receive federal funding for broadband buildout from subcontracting the work in order to undercut its union employees jobs and standards and that would protect workers' right to organize a union.

Broadband Brigade leaders will be educating union members and the public and lobbying federal, state and local elected officials to secure enforceable commitments from Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that want to use public funds to expand broadband. Those commitments include the creation of good union jobs and high quality fiber-optic broadband access for the communities that need it most.

Broadband providers have failed to provide universal, affordable access, leaving more than a third of households nationwide without home internet that meets the Federal Communication Commission's minimum definition of broadband. And when providers have taken federal funds for deployment, they've repeatedly failed to deliver on promises to union workers and customers, often outsourcing the construction work to low-wage contractors who cut corners and risk safety and quality.

For more information on CWA's Build Broadband Better Campaign please visit [buildbroadbandbetter.org](https://buildbroadbandbetter.org)

To receive CWA action alerts via text message,  
Text CWAAction to 69866

It's August, and our technicians are now reporting to their garages each morning, as the Home Garaging Agreement ended July 31. Our Work from Home Agreement will expire September 30<sup>th</sup>, so in two more months our members who work at the Chesapeake Complex will return to the office, also. Needless to say, CWA wants our members to return to the workplace in as safe a manner as possible.



After months of decreased COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations and deaths, restrictions loosened this summer thanks to the 164 million Americans who chose to get vaccinated. Stores, restaurants, gyms, schools and daycare centers reopened; masks were deemed optional for those who were fully vaccinated. Everything started to feel a little like "normal". I actually sat in a restaurant for the first time in sixteen months and I bought tickets to a concert. It felt good! It felt normal.

Now the coronavirus numbers are on the rise again because of the raging Delta variant. Locally, the number of people age twelve and over who are fully vaccinated ranges between 50-60% in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, but the vaccine rates have stalled. While it is possible for someone who is fully vaccinated to catch COVID-19 (there is less than a 0.001% chance that a fully vaccinated person will have a fatal breakthrough case) **over 99% of the current cases involve those who never got vaccinated.** Last week Maryland reported the fourth death due to COVID of a child under the age of nine.

The CDC has recently reported that Delta is considered "highly contagious" and is likely as transmissible as chicken pox. Look at Florida: They reported over 21,000 new cases last Friday, which is the highest number of cases in a single day since the beginning of the pandemic. Forty nine percent of Florida's population is not fully vaccinated, and their hospitals are already struggling to keep up with the number of new COVID cases, which is approaching last year's peak. I found the comparison of Vermont and Alabama's numbers interesting, too, because Vermont has the highest concentration of vaccinated residents, while Alabama has the lowest. In the past week Alabama reported almost 15,000 new cases and 48 deaths. During the same time, Vermont reported less than 200 new cases and zero deaths.

In order to put the brakes on this latest surge and prevent another "shut down" of our country, some federal, state and local governments and some non-union private sector employers are now mandating that their employees be vaccinated. Those who refuse the vaccine could be terminated or could be subject to weekly testing and/or the loss of benefits if they contract the virus.

Area schools are scheduled to reopen in a month and children who are too young to receive the vaccine will probably be wearing masks on their buses and in their classrooms as they go out into a world that many have been shielded from since March of 2020. While face coverings help to shield the COVID virus from noses and mouths, they certainly don't provide in impenetrable barrier. We need to do everything in our power to protect our children and the adults who can't be vaccinated due to their health condition from this deadly virus.

Our members and retirees who know me or have read my articles in this newsletter know that I'm a big believer in providing information, not telling you what to do. My hope is that you will consider the information

that I have researched and provided, perhaps conduct more research yourself, and then make an informed decision based on the facts. I'm asking our members who haven't gotten vaccinated yet to please reconsider, for the sake of our children, your families and your coworkers. It seems like everyday we're reading a newspaper article or viewing a video on social media of someone who was adamantly anti-vax but is now deathly sick from COVID and is telling loved ones to get the vaccine. More than 4 billion vaccines have been administered worldwide to date. Please join those of us who are already fully vaccinated to protect others and to put the brakes on this deadly disease. I can't think of a better example of solidarity.

In Solidarity,

*Marilyn*



**Buy Nationals Tickets to Support CSA**



While there's no Labor Night at the Washington Nationals this year, CWA Local 2108 baseball fans can still support the Metro Washington Council AFL-CIO Community Services Agency, and get discounted tickets. "This is a great way to help local families and support our championship team," says CSA Executive Director Letycia Pastrana. The VIP discount code is now active for all remaining games and all you need to do is go to the following link:

<https://www.mlb.com/nationals/tickets/single-game-tickets>

Once you have selected the game date, find where it says "Do you have a coupon code?" and enter **DCLABOR** in all caps and hit the red check mark to the right of it to activate the discount code. You'll then be able to select your seats with the discounted tickets. For every ticket sold with the DCLABOR code, the Nats will contribute \$1 to CSA.

**RMC 2108 Retirees Corner**

The RMC Executive Board wants to encourage everyone to continue safe health practices while enjoying the summer. Covid-19 infections are on the rise but we still hope to have an in-person meeting at the local in September. We look forward to seeing everyone at that meeting and we will send out a reminder email prior. I want to remind everyone that our August meeting has been cancelled.

Enjoy and stay safe!!

**Calvin C Foster Jr**  
**President- RMC 2108**



On July 12, 2021 Verizon notified CWA they were declaring a "Special EISP" offer in the Potomac Region. Packages were distributed to eligible employees on July 12, 2021. The volunteer period began on July 19, 2021 and will conclude on August 17, 2021. Volunteers whose applications for the Special EISP are accepted will have an off payroll date of September 5 2021.



Under the terms of this Special EISP offer, employees will receive a "supplemental" voluntary termination bonus of \$40,000, in addition to the \$10,000 voluntary termination bonus. Employees will also receive \$2200 for each year of service up to 40 years and a waiver of age based pension reductions for early commencement. There will also be an acceleration of the next pension band increase.

In CWA Local 2108, all of the surplus declarations affect job titles located at the Chesapeake Complex. While many different job titles were included in this offer, Maintenance Administrators, Central Office Technicians and numerous clerical positions made up the majority of the targeted surplus announcement. If you are unsure if your group was included in this "voluntary" surplus, contact CWA Local 2108 on 301-595-2108.

CWA Local 2108 recommends anyone who is considering this Special EISP to speak with a financial advisor prior to accepting this package to maximize your retirement portfolio and avoid costly tax penalties.

## Local 2108 Mourns the Loss of Brian Simmons

CWA Local 2108 is saddened by the passing of Brian Simmons on July 24, 2021. Brian became a member of Local 2108 after he was hired by Verizon in January 2001 and almost immediately became involved in our union. Brian started as workplace mobilizer and then became a Steward in 2005. Brian was also on the Local's Entertainment Committee.



Brian always had a positive outlook on any situation and garnered the respect of his peers including those in the management ranks when trying to work through issues. Many who worked with Brian described him as more like a brother than a co-worker. His friendly, outgoing personality and his prankster nature brought joy to everyone who knew him. He was a real people person and would help anyone even before he was asked.

Brian is survived by his mother Carolyn Simmons Bright and his daughter Des'ja Smith.

Cards can be sent to the family in care of Brian's mother:

Ms. Carolyn Simmons Bright  
16001 S. Thames Ct.  
Accokeek, MD 20607

## Personals

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

**Charles E. Jones**, who passed away on May 27, 2020 and **Eliza Jones** who passed away April 16, 2021, parents of retiree **Nancy Bailey**.

**Juanita "Nita" Scheungrab**, wife of retired member **Al Scheungrab** who passed away on May 10, 2021.

**Margaret D. Mooney**, mother of CWA District 2-13 Vice President **Ed Mooney**, who passed away on Tuesday, July 13, 2021.

**Brian Simmons**, an active member and CWA Local 2108 Steward, who passed away on July 24, 2021.

## Congratulations to Recent Retirees:



Lisa Flaherty



## Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out this important workshop presented by **Networth Financial** Group to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

### Retirement Preparedness Score Webinar

**Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 6:30 PM** - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

To join by phone - Dial In: **(267) 831-0333 or (301) 715-8592**  
**Webinar ID - 980 0164 5990 Password: 364497**

### Timing Social Security Benefits Webinar

**Thursday, August 26, 2021 at 6:30 PM** - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

To join by phone - Dial In: **(267) 831-0333 or (301) 715-8592**  
**Webinar ID - 916 3954 5523 Password: 068781**

**Reservations are required** and to RSVP you may call Networth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at [Networth.net](https://www.networth.net).

## Have You Scheduled Your Floating Holiday?

It seems that almost every year CWA Local 2108 hears from members who haven't scheduled their Floating Holiday prior to October 1st of the calendar year and then Verizon denies that employee the ability to schedule after that date, causing them to lose it altogether. It is the Union's position that if an employee has not scheduled it by October 1st, it is the company's responsibility to notify the employee to schedule it at that time.

With that being said, CWA Local 2108 strongly suggests that all of our members working under the Verizon agreement schedule their Floating Holiday prior to October 1, 2021. This way you cannot be denied the ability to schedule your holiday. Keep in mind that you can still be required to work on your Floating Holiday. In that case you will receive holiday pay treatment just as if you worked any other negotiated holiday.



# What's in Your Union Made Picnic Basket?

# Local 2108 Calendar



look for these products for your next picnic

### HOTDOGS:

- » Ball Park
- » Boar's Head
- » Foster Farms
- » Hebrew National
- » Hofmann
- » Hormel
- » Oscar Mayer

### SAUSAGES:

- » Gianelli
- » Kroger brand

### BREAD AND ROLLS:

- » Wonder Bread
- » Alfred Nichols Bakery
- » Stroehmann
- » Arnold
- » Francisco

### CONDIMENTS:

- » French's mustard
- » Gulden's mustard
- » Heinz ketchup
- » Jack Daniel's barbeque sauce

### SNACKS:

- » Munchos
- » Funyuns
- » Rold Gold
- » Frito-Lay
- » Doritos
- » Chex
- » Mikesells Potato Chips
- » Mission Tortilla Strips

### SODAS AND JUICE:

- » A&W Root Beer
- » Canada Dry Ginger Ale
- » Coca-Cola Products
- » Kool-Aid Sticks
- » Ocean Spray Cranberry Juice

### BEER:

- » Miller
- » Coors
- » Anheuser-Busch
- » Black Eye Ale
- » Black Hawk Stout
- » Blue Heron Pale Ale
- » Budweiser

The Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO does its best to verify the products listed are union-made. Some products may be made in both union and non-union facilities, please check the packaging for the union label where available. For these products and more, check the ULSTD website at [www.unionlabel.org](http://www.unionlabel.org).

### AUGUST 2021

- 4 Chief Stewards Meeting - Cancelled  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 RMC 2108 Meeting - **Cancelled**
- 11 Membership Meeting - **6:00pm**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- 6 Labor Day  
Local Office Closed  
**Labor Day**
- 8 RMC 2108 Meeting - **11:00am**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 8 Membership Meeting - **6:00pm**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

*If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative, officer or steward to be present at this meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion.*

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** Membership Meeting - Wednesday, August 11, 2021 - 6:00pm  
RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, August 11, 2021 - 11:00am - Cancelled



10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

Web Address: [www.cwalocal2108.org](http://www.cwalocal2108.org)

Local Office: (301) 595-2108 :: Local Fax: (301) 595-2412

Tamera Nelson - Vice President

LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President

Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer

Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President

Marilyn Irwin - President

Printing Done In-House

Published Monthly

# 2108News

Communications Workers of America Local 2108

ISSN: 0162-248X

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

10782 Rhode Island Avenue  
Beltsville, MD 20705-2513

LOCAL 2108  
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 5128  
Hyattsville, Md.