

New Federal Bill Would Crack Down on Call Center Offshoring

New legislation introduced in June by Senator Bob Casey (D-Pa.), in the U.S. Senate and the bipartisan duo of Reps. David McKinley (R-W.Va.) and Mark Pocan (D-Wis.) in the House would help crack down on companies for offshoring call center jobs.

The U.S. Call Center Worker and Consumer Protection Act (S.1792 and H.R. 3219) would ensure that taxpayer dollars are not rewarding companies that offshore their customer service work and would give consumers the power to decide where to have their calls handled.

The new federal call center bill builds on the momentum generated by CWA members across the country as they pushed states to introduce, move forward, and pass legislation addressing issues around call center offshoring during the 2019 legislative session in both Democratic and Republican-controlled state legislatures.

In the last decade, there has been an increase in companies relocating their call centers overseas where foreign workers are often exposed to dismal labor conditions and paid cheaper wages.



So far in 2019, 24 state legislatures have introduced bills on call center offshoring, up from 18 in 2018. Both legislative chambers in Alabama unanimously passed a bill to stop taxpayer dollars going to companies that offshore call center jobs and the Governor signed the bill into law. Colorado, Maine, and Nevada also passed bills in 2019, joining Louisiana's passage of a state bill in 2018. An additional four states have passed a state call center bill in one legislative chamber in 2019 while five others have held legislative committee hearings and votes on call center bills.

Communities across the country have committed millions in taxpayer dollars to fund incentives for companies to bring jobs to their neighborhoods, but have been left empty-handed. "Our number one priority in Congress is protecting and creating American jobs," said Co-sponsor David McKinley. "Plain and simple, we should not be rewarding companies for moving jobs offshore. This bill does not mandate that companies keep call centers here in America, but simply says if you move call center jobs offshore, you don't receive funding from the government. This should be common sense," he said.

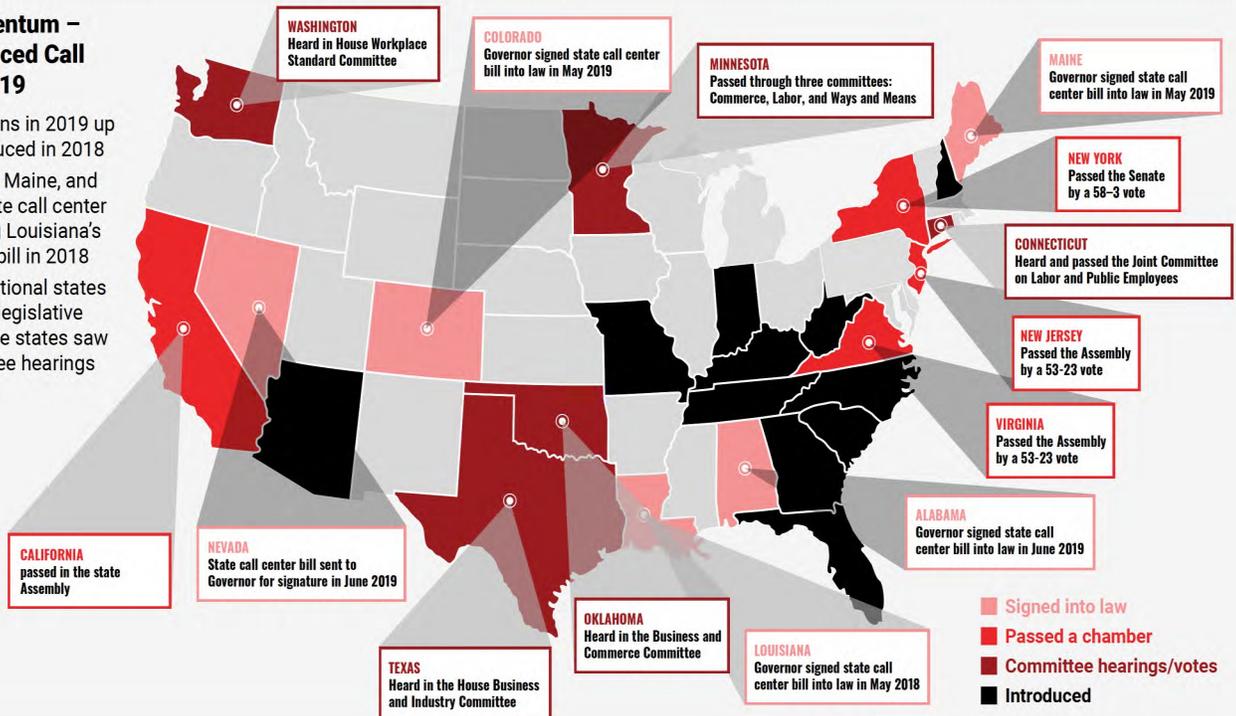


Standing Up for Call Center Workers Across America

Holding companies accountable and pushing for federal and state call center legislation:

Legislative Momentum – 24 States Introduced Call Center Bills in 2019

- 24 state introductions in 2019 up from 18 bills introduced in 2018
- Alabama, Colorado, Maine, and Nevada passed state call center bills in 2019, joining Louisiana's passage of a state bill in 2018
- Also in 2019, 4 additional states passed the bill in a legislative chamber and 5 more states saw legislative committee hearings and votes



The Washington Baltimore News Guild, TNG-CWA Local 32035 was honored for their continual efforts to protect our democracy and free press at the 2019 Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO Salute to Leadership Awards Dinner in late June. Many of you may not be aware that since the 1995 merger of The News Guild and CWA our Union includes over 32,000 journalists and other employees of newspapers and news agencies in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, such as clerks who handle classified ads and computer support workers. The Newspaper Guild was founded in 1933 by newspaper journalists to not only improve wages and working conditions for its members, but to also fight for honesty in journalism and the news industry's business practices. You can find TNG-CWA members working near us at the Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, York Daily Record and York Dispatch.



The AFL-CIO honor came on the heels of Time Magazine recognizing jailed and killed journalists as its 2018 "Person of the Year". Sadly, for the first time in history the U.S. was among the top 5 deadliest countries for journalists last year. At least 34 U.S. journalists were killed because of their work in 2018, up from 18 retaliation killings in 2017.

Close to home, June 28th marked the first anniversary of the murders of 5 at the Capital Gazette in Annapolis. Gerald Fischman, Rob Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith, and Wendi Winters went to work that morning and never got to go home again. Their alleged murderer, Jarrod Ramos of Laurel, was reportedly angry and held a grudge that the Gazette had published an article in 2011 about him being put on probation for harassing a high school acquaintance through social media and email. He went as far as to sue the paper in 2012 for defamation for reporting on his guilty plea. Ramos' case was thrown out of court by a judge who ruled that the article was written based on factual, publicly-available records, and therefore didn't meet the definition of defamation. Ramos, who has entered not guilty pleas to all charges against him reportedly, mailed three signed letters the morning of the attack announcing his intentions to kill everyone on the Capital Gazette premises that day.

In spite of the escalation of attacks against journalists and news agencies, the President is ignoring pleas to tone down his rhetoric against them. In February he labeled the NY Times "a true enemy of the people" the day after they published an extensive report detailing ways in which Trump has sought to influence investigations into his presidency and allies. He has previously described specific outlets as "fake news" and an "enemy of the people", but in April Trump declared the full press corps as "truly the enemy of the people". This happened after he was told to his face that this incendiary rhetoric encourages threats and violence against journalists at home and abroad. While many previous Presidents have complained about the coverage of their administrations, they still "fiercely defended" the free press.

I don't think it is by accident that freedom of speech is addressed in the very First

Amendment to our Constitution. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Our brothers and sisters who are TNG-CWA members, along with other journalists who are not union members, should not be threatened or fearful because they are doing their jobs. To quote Thomas Jefferson:

"Out liberty cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it."

Congratulations to TNG-CWA Local 32035 on your Salute to Leadership honor. Keep up the good fight!

In Solidarity,

Marilyn

A.I.L. to Offer Additional No-Cost Benefits For All Members and Retirees

American Income Life is pleased to announce that CWA Local 2108 has obtained a union label Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit in the amount of \$3,500 for members. This additional benefit is being provided to each active and retired member at NO COST to you or to CWA Local 2108.

These benefits are being provided through the cooperation of CWA Local 2108 and American Income Life Insurance Company. American Income Life is a 100% Union Company and is rated A+ "Superior" by A.M. Best Company. This is a voluntary program; you are already covered with this \$3,500 AD&D benefit

In addition, you and your family are eligible to participate in the Health Services Discount Plan. This plan provides your family with substantial discounts on the following services: Eye Care, Chiropractic Care, Prescription Drugs and Hearing Aids all at NO COST the first year. An optional Dental Discount is also available with an activation fee. Child Safe Kits and Family Information Guides will also be available.

American Income has been in business for more than sixty five years serving America's Union members and their families in the spirit of **BE UNION - BUY UNION - SHOP UNION**. The company and their voluntary programs are presented to help our members and their families secure supplemental benefits.

This benefit is presented as a supplement to your current negotiated benefits and does not replace any benefit currently in effect. You and your family may qualify for additional insurance benefits. Please take a few minutes and listen to the AIL representative who will be calling on you.

CWA Local 2108 will be sending out an announcement of these benefits via mail next month. All interested members should return the yellow reply card for a union label, no-cost, laptop needs analysis. As stated above, this a voluntary supplemental benefit program.



Refunds on the way for Medicare Advantage Part B Injection Claims

As a result of a single Medicare Advantage retiree contacting one of the CWA Health Care Benefit Coordinator's (HCBC), the Health Care Oversight Committee (HCOC) has arranged for corrected payments to be made to participants who had been billed for Medicare Part B injections in error. This error will result in \$320,072.91 in refunds to specific Verizon retirees who were overbilled for Class B services.

Going forward, with respect to cost sharing for injections (other than allergy and preventive injections) under the Medicare Advantage plan, the Verizon Managed Care Network and the Medical Expense Plan for Mid-Atlantic Post 1989 Associate Retirees, all Part B injections will be covered at 100% when the injection is billed in conjunction with or without an office co-pay. Effective for the first year after Verizon determines it is administratively feasible; Part B injections will be covered at 100% if billed in conjunction with an office visit co-pay and will be covered at 90% coinsurance if not billed in conjunction with an office visit co-pay.

In addition, for those plan participants whose providers charged the participant a coinsurance for a Part B injection since January 1, 2017, United Health Care will refund the providers directly for any such coinsurance amount the provider charged the participants. The providers will be responsible for reimbursing the impacted participants.

Regardless of how small or simple the issue may appear, CWA Local 2108 encourages you to continue to contact our HCBC's for health benefit issues.

Once again, it pays to belong to CWA!!

2020 Union Plus Scholarship Program Accepting Applications Now

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$4.5 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. Over 3,000 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

Eligibility

Current and retired members of participating unions, their spouses and their dependent children (as defined by IRS regulations). At least one year of continuous union membership by the applicant, applicant's spouse or parent (if applicant is a dependent). The one year membership minimum must be satisfied by May 31, 2020.

Application Timeline:

Applications are available starting in mid-June, and a complete application must be received on or before 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on **January 31, 2020**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Scholarship Award Amounts:

Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2020. Students may re-apply each year.

Award date:

The Scholarship Committee will determine recipients of scholarship awards by May 31 each year.

To apply, go to:

<https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/money/union-plus-scholarships>

RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

The 4th of July is one of our country's greatest celebrations. America's birthday is the day we demonstrate to the world how perseverance and the unity of people can overcome any obstacle.

It is important as we celebrate our past successes, we recognize the many challenges still before us. Health care issues, workers' rights, and many proposed changes to issues that affect seniors across our country still need to be dealt with. As CWA members we have the advantage of a unified presence in these national matters. Together, we carry a strong voice that helps push our agenda and benefits us as we get along in years,

We encourage everyone to get involved with our retiree chapter to help be a part of these changes. Together, we can work to overcome any obstacle as well!!

Our next luncheon meeting will be on July 10, 2019 at 11:00am, Please make plans to join us!!

See you there!!



Calvin C Foster Jr
President- RMC 2108



**LABOR NIGHT AT
CAMDEN YARDS**

Friday, July 12, 2019 - 7:05PM



Baltimore Orioles –vs– Tampa Bay Rays

Tickets are \$12.00 each and will be sold on a first come/first served basis by calling the Local on 301-595-2108. Only a limited number of tickets are available. Call today !!

Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out one of these important workshops presented by **Networth Financial** Group to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon and get treated to a free meal!!

Find out how prepared you are for retirement with our Retirement Preparedness Score - RPS

Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 6:30 PM - Ruth's Chris, 1777 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville, Md.

Retirement Benefits Workshop

Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 4:30PM- Verizon Work Center, 2600 Barry Road SE, Washington, DC 20037.

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Networth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at Networth.net. **Space is limited and the workshop is limited to CWA members 55 and older with 15+ years of net credited service and their spouse only.**

AVAYA Implements Changes to Retiree Health Care Benefits

Over the years, CWA and Avaya have negotiated retirement medical benefits for our represented retirees through a group plan. Recently, Avaya reviewed the health care market, and in their opinion, determined that by using an exchange, retirees would have greater access to more options.

CWA did not bargain nor do we agree with the Company's decision and we will continue to look for viable options for our retirees.

Effective January 1, 2020, Avaya will no longer provide coverage for represented retirees retired as of April 30, 2019 and their dependents through the current group retiree medical plan. Instead, retirees and their eligible dependents will enroll in a medical plan through an exchange. For the remainder of this year, retirees will continue to be covered by the existing Retiree Medical Plan. Eligible retirees must enroll for coverage for 2020 during open enrollment this fall.

For the 2020 changes, you do not need to take any action now. You will receive more information about the changes from AVAYA about the decisions you need to make and how to enroll in coverage for yourself and your eligible dependents. You will also have access to assistance to help you understand this new approach and the enrollment process at that time. If you have general questions prior to receiving the information that will arrive in the fall of 2019, you may call ViaBenefits at 1-855-535-7157 M-F 8AM- 9PM ET.

Local 2108 Calendar

JULY 2019

4 Independence Day
Local Office Closed



10 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

10 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

29-31 2019 CWA Bi-Annual Convention
Las Vegas, NV

AUGUST 2019

7 Chief Stewards Meeting - Cancelled
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

14 RMC 2108 Meeting - Cancelled
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

14 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

Welcome to Local 2108
Transferred Members

<u>Teresa Thomas</u> Michelle Davis Gregory Ware	<u>Tony Meeks</u> Gregory Fletcher
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Congratulations to Recent Retirees:

David "Saint" Brown
James E. Todd



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, July 10, 2019, 6:00pm RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, July 10, 2019, 11:00am

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Communications Workers of America Local 2108

Martlyn Irwin - President
Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President
Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer
LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President
Matt Klingman - Vice President
Local Office: (301) 595-2108 :: Local Fax: (301) 595-2412
Web Address: www.cwalocal2108.org
10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

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COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
LOCAL 2108
10782 Rhode Island Avenue
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