

Public health groups are suing the Trump administration for blocking a rule requiring employers to report details of workplace injuries.

The White House Quietly Rolled Back Workplace Safety Rules During the Shutdown

The partial government shutdown may have disrupted air travel and triggered financial hardship, but it didn't stop the White House from continuing to dismantle regulations meant to protect US workers.

Last month, the Trump administration gutted a 2016 rule that required most employers to electronically submit detailed reports of all workplace injuries to the Department of Labor each year — reports they've long been required to keep, but never required to submit.



The Improve Tracking of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses rule would have allowed the government, for the first time, to get more complete data on how many US workers are injured on the job and how those injuries happened. Enacted under the Obama administration, it was supposed to help inspectors identify dangerous work conditions, and in turn pressure businesses to comply with workplace safety laws.

But in 2017, the Trump administration put the electronic reporting rule on hold, then amended it this summer to let employers off the hook. Employers would no longer have to submit the detailed injury reports — just a summary report.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which reviews regulations before they are published, then rushed the amendment through the three-month review process in just six weeks — even though the office was closed during the shutdown and two-thirds of the office's employees

were furloughed. Before the Government shutdown was over, the changes were finalized and published.

The move caught labor leaders off-guard and drew sharp criticism from public health researchers, who rely on injury data to analyze health risks and develop prevention programs. Public Citizen, a nonprofit group that promotes research-based policies to improve occupational health, immediately filed a lawsuit with two other public health groups to block the changes. The AFL-CIO labor federation accused the department of ramming through the controversial changes as a favor to big business groups, who oppose the rule.

"The process was totally opaque, not transparent, and clearly rushed," Peg Seminario, the AFL-CIO's safety and health director, stated. "The only reason this was rushed through was because the Trump administration wanted to relieve employers of having to report their injury data."

The Trump administration's rollback of the injury reporting rule is the latest example of the president's anti-worker economic agenda. Since taking office, the Department of Labor has systematically tried to weaken regulations meant to protect workers' pay, retirement, and safety. For example, the agency tried to change pay rules to allow employers to pocket workers' tips, and delayed a rule to extend overtime pay to millions of workers. These moves clash with Trump's populist campaign promises, and hurt many of the blue-collar workers who voted him into office.

The CWA Joseph A. Beirne Foundation Scholarship Program

The CWA Joe Beirne Foundation was established in October 1974 by the Communications Workers of America Executive Board to honor the name and memory of the founding President of CWA, who served for more than 30 years. In his capacity as the first CWA President, Joe Beirne took great pride in the roles he played in the fields of education and learning and other areas of social concern.

Sixteen partial college scholarships of \$4,000 each are being offered for the 2019-2020 school year. Winners, selected in a lottery drawing, also will receive second-year scholarships of the same amount contingent upon satisfactory academic accomplishment. Part-time students, less than 12 credits, will receive half of the scholarship monies.

Eligible for the awards are CWA members and their spouses, children and grandchildren, including those of retired or deceased members. Applicants must be high school graduates or at least high school students who will graduate during the year in which they apply. Undergraduate and graduate students returning to schooling may also apply.

Applications are accepted during the months of November through April. **Final deadline for the 2019-2020 school year is April 30, 2019.**

To apply online, go to:

<http://www.cwa-union.org/pages/beirne>

Thinking About Retirement?

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

Investment Basics Workshop

Saturday, February 16, 2019 @ 10 AM - CWA Local 2100
12436 Eastern Avenue, Middle River, MD

Retirement Benefits Workshop

Wednesday, February 27, 2019 @ 6:30pm - Elks Lodge 2210
Old Washington Rd. Waldorf, MD

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Nettworth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at Nettworth.net. **Space is limited and the workshop is limited to CWA members and their spouse only.**

Unions don't act with "integrity" aren't "necessary", and only offer "empty promises and unrealistic expectations". "The best way to secure jobs is to provide excellent products, services, and customer service", not by joining a labor union. The 2016 strike when CWA members at the Brooklyn, NY Verizon Wireless Store joined with nearly 40,000 Verizon landline workers was a bad thing because of its impact on "working conditions for employees and the experience for customers". "We don't believe unions are necessary at Verizon Wireless" because the only difference between union-represented and non-union-represented employees are the dues union members pay.

You've probably guessed already that these are quotes from Verizon managers, Verizon Human Resources internal documents and Verizon's management-only website about union-busting 101. The efforts Verizon resorts to and big bucks they are willing to spend to thwart union growth within the company has gone on for decades and continues to this day. Just two months ago Verizon finalized a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board after the CWA filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge in response to a complaint from a VZ employee in Albuquerque, NM, after she experienced interrogation and surveillance by the company for engaging in union activity.

As soon as they hear whispers that employees are considering unionizing, Verizon has a "Jump Team" of executives who are ready at a moment's notice to conduct forced captive audience meetings, warning about the dangers of unions. They imply that "union" stores sometimes get closed and suggest that perks such as working from home might be available if there is no pesky union to contend with. Often the workers who are leading the union organizing campaign are fired, based on trumped-up allegations.

I've got a simple question: **If the only difference between union-represented and non-represented employees are the dues union members pay, why does Verizon spend so much time and so much money trying to prevent their Wireless employees from joining the CWA?**

Of course my question is rhetorical, because all of us who are paying attention know that it is ludicrous to say that dues are the only difference between a union job and a non-union job. In 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that non-union workers earn less than 82% of what their union counterparts earn. They are also much less likely to have medical benefits for themselves and their dependents, pensions and/or 401(k) plans. They are more likely to have on the job accidents and injuries though, because of less stringent safety rules and enforcement. And don't forget that non-union workers are typically considered "at will" employees, meaning they can be fired at any time for no reason at all. There are no "just cause" standards for discipline and dismissal, and very little recourse for the terminated worker.

I think it's easy for us to take the benefits of union membership for granted. Our active members and retirees have access to great medical care and pay less out of pocket than most of our neighbors, friends and family. We have either a defined-benefit pension plan or a 401(k) plan with a 100% match to plan for our retirement years. We have a signed contract that won't expire until August of 2023, which includes annual pay and pension band increases, and only modest increases to our healthcare costs.

After working under a union contract like ours for awhile, it's easy to forget that everyone doesn't enjoy the same benefits as us, and that there is no guarantee that we will always maintain them in the future. Our contract is only as strong as the members and retirees who are willing to fight for it, today and into the future. We can't allow ourselves to be lulled into complacency because the Verizon contract won't expire for four and a half years. We have an employer with a proven track record of wanting to be rid of the union. There are bills being introduced and executive actions being taken daily which put our future in jeopardy. It is imperative that CWA members and retirees remain vigilant and in solidarity with each other during the years that we don't have contracts expiring, and not just in the years they do expire.

For example, CWA is currently asking our members and retirees to reach out to their legislators in support of H.R. 1, the **For the People**

Act. This common sense legislation would put power back in the hands of working people by keeping money out of politics, thereby reducing the power of corporate and wealthy donors. This non-partisan bill is a true no-brainer for working Americans. When you get a text message, email or flyer, or see a Facebook post asking you to contact your legislator in support of the For the People Act, please take a couple of minutes to do so. Standing together and taking collective actions to enact worker-friendly laws and fight those that only benefit the 1% is the smartest use of our time between now and our next contract expiration!

In Solidarity,

Marilyn

Flowers and Gifts

These union supermarkets offer flower arrangements created by union workers.

- ♥ Vons
- ♥ Safeway
- ♥ Pavillions
- ♥ Gelson's
- ♥ Costco
- ♥ Ralphs
- ♥ Giant
- ♥ Teleflora



(Offered through Union Plus, union members save 20% on orders when the shop through the www.unionplus.org website)

Sweets and Treats

- ♥ Allan Candy Company
- ♥ Brown & Haley
- ♥ Dare Foods Limited
- ♥ Frankford Candy & Chocolate
- ♥ Ghiradelli Chocolate Company
- ♥ Parrson's Candy Company
- ♥ Hershey Foods Corp.
- ♥ Sconza Candy Company
- ♥ See's Candy
- ♥ Jelly Belly Candy Company
- ♥ Nestle USA
- ♥ Tootsie Roll Industries
- ♥ Russel Stover
- ♥ Necco

(Hershey operates a number of non-union manufacturing facilities in the U.S. and Mexico that produce Hershey products, including Reese Peanut Butter Cups and more)

RMC 2108 Retirees Corner

As we begin a new year, we see signs of change for our country. The Democrats are in the majority in the House of Representatives again, and a half dozen candidates have already put their hats in the ring to run for President in 2020.



CWA and its RMC are committed to share information with our members about impending legislation and the candidates who are running for office. We must be informed to ensure that we make decisions which are most beneficial to us as retirees and seniors.

That's why every RMC Meeting includes news about legislation that can impact our lives and retirement, in addition to a nice lunch to share with a great group of retirees! I hope you can join us at our next RMC Meeting on Wednesday, February 13th at 11:00 at the Local 2108 office. Lunch will be provided, and you may bring a dessert to share if you would like.

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

Last year, Verizon advised CWA that due to the additional savings from tax reform, they were going to provide all employees (that includes first and second level management), 50 shares of restricted stock.

Under the conditions of this stock grant, all employees who were actively at work on February 1, 2018 were eligible for the program. Employees that were on a Company approved leave of absence on February 1, 2018, such as a short-term disability leave, they would be eligible for the grant if they returned to work prior to January 31, 2020. Eligible full-time employees will receive 50 restricted stock units (RSUs) and eligible part-time employees will receive 25 RSUs. A restricted stock unit is a hypothetical share of Verizon common stock. The award you are receiving will vest over a 2-year period, with 50% of the number of units vesting on 1/31/2019 and the remaining 50% of the units vesting on 1/31/2020. If you satisfy the vesting requirement for the award, you will receive a cash payment equal to the value of the vested RSUs on the applicable vesting dates. The RSU's grant date is February 1, 2018.

The value of your RSU award has the opportunity to grow in two ways. First if Verizon stock price increases, the value of each RSU also increases. Second, quarterly Dividend Equivalent Units (DEUs) can increase the number of RSU's you will receive at payout.

The actual value of your payout depends upon the closing price of Verizon's common stock on each of the vesting dates, 1/31/19 and 1/31/20, subject to any tax withholding obligations and legally required deductions. **Vested RSUs will be paid in cash through local payroll as no later than two and one-half months after of the vesting date.** On January 31st, the closing price on Verizon stock was \$55.06.

If you should happen to leave the payroll prior to the vesting date, the reason you separate from Verizon determines how your RSUs are treated. If you voluntarily resign (and are not retirement eligible) before the applicable vesting dates your award will be cancelled immediately and you will forfeit any unvested RSUs. If you are terminated for cause at any time before the award is paid, you will forfeit any unpaid RSUs (vested or unvested). Under other circumstances when you separate, you will not forfeit the unvested RSUs. For example, if you retire when you are retirement-eligible, are involuntarily terminated without cause, separate from service under a Company provided severance plan (or, if you are an associate, you leave pursuant to a surplus declaration), or you separate from service due to death or disability on or before January 31, 2020, your then unvested RSUs will vest and be payable on the regularly scheduled payment date. If you die, any payment you would have become eligible to receive will be made to your estate.

Any payment received under the award will not be taken into account as compensation in the determination of benefits under any pension, savings, life insurance, severance or other benefit plan maintained by Verizon and it will not be included in wages for computations of overtime. Furthermore, payouts from this award may not be rolled into an existing 401(k) plan.

**Are you "WEARING RED" on
Thursdays?**

Personals

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

William J. Gray, Sr., step-father of **David Harding**, who passed away December 19, 2018.

Tambria Spencer, daughter of retired member **Vernadine Jackson** who passed away December 11, 2018

Duncan McElroy, brother of **Scot McElroy** who died on January 13, 2019

Domonic Gioffre, father of retired member **Joe Gioffre** who passed away on January 14, 2019.

Marc Schellin, active member of Local 2108 and former Secretary-Treasurer of Local 2336, who passed away January 17, 2019.

Welcome to Local 2108

New Members

Micki Wade
Deidre Douglas

Kendra Whitaker-Hughes
Bernard Randall-Jones

Transferred Members

Mike Foster
Peter D Colby

Congratulations to Recent Retirees:

Josephine Livezey
Cindy Shiplett

The Vincent & Patricia Maisano Labor Scholarship Program

This scholarship award is being presented as a tribute to the second CWA District 13 International Vice President and the former Secretary-Treasurer of CWA Local 13000. Both of these individuals retired in April of 2005. Vince and Pat both placed a high priority on education.

All CWA District 2-13 members, their spouses, children and grandchildren (including dependents of laid-off, retired or deceased CWA District 2-13 members) who are or were members in good standing at the time of separation from the Union may apply. Applicants must be high school graduates or at least high school students who will graduate during the year in which they apply. Undergraduate and graduate students returning to schooling may also apply. Prior winners may not apply.

One (1) scholarship, to be paid at the rate of \$1,000.00, will be awarded to an eligible applicant from the District 2-13 Potomac Region.

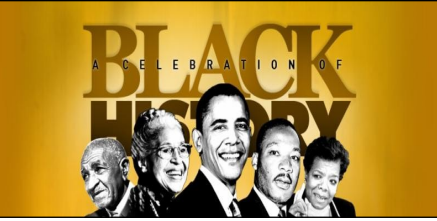
Applications will be accepted during the months of December through March. Final deadline is March 31st of the year in which the scholarship will be awarded.

The winners will be chosen by lottery drawing. To apply for the scholarship, follow the link below:

<https://district2-13.cwa-union.org/pages/scholarship-d213>

CWA Local 2108 Celebrates the Origins of Black History Month

Back in 1926, historian Carter G. Woodson and the organization he founded, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, chose the second week of February to celebrate the contributions of African Americans throughout our country's history. They named it "Negro History Week." Woodson himself explained the significance of carving out a time period to commemorate African American achievements as such: "If a race has no history, it has no worthwhile tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated."



Woodson chose the second week of February specifically because it coincided with the birthdays of two figures who were pivotal to abolitionism: Abraham Lincoln, who was born on February 12, and Frederick Douglass, who was born on February 14. February held other events of historical value, too, such as the birth of civil rights leader W.E.B. DuBois (February 23rd) and the passing of the 15th Amendment, which gave African Americans the right to vote (February 3, 1870). African American communities had already celebrated these dates since the end of the Civil War, so the precedent was already set.

Throughout the early 20th century, the literature of the Civil Rights movement began to spread in churches and schools in states that had sizable African American populations. Communities started to organize local celebrations, host performances and lectures, and establish history clubs. Soon, mayors in various cities began to endorse Black History Week as an official holiday. The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s helped this snowballing movement evolve from a week to a month. In February 1969, the leaders of the Black United Students at Kent State University first proposed expanding Black History Week into Black History Month. The following year, the university celebrated Black History Month for the very first time.

On February 10, 1976, President Gerald Ford brought Black History Month into existence with the following statement, "In the Bicentennial year of our Independence, we can review with admiration the impressive contributions of black Americans to our national life and culture. One hundred years ago, to help highlight these achievements, Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. We are grateful to him today for his initiative, and we are richer for the work of his organization. Freedom and the recognition of individual rights are what our Revolution was all about."

Local 2108 Calendar

FEBRUARY 2019

- 6 Chief Stewards Meeting - 9:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 13 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 13 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 14 Valentines Day
- 18 President's Day
Local Office Closed

MARCH 2019

- 10 Daylight Savings Time Begins
Set clocks ahead 1 hour.
- 13 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 13 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 17 St Patrick's Day



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, February 13, 2019, 6:00pm
RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 11:00am



10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

Web Address: www.cwacal2108.org

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

Matt Klingman - 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.