

After Two Years of Bargaining, Mobilization and Political Intervention... Zenimax Workers Achieve First Contract

In a first for the video game industry, over 300 quality assurance workers working at Microsoft subsidiary ZeniMax Media — represented by Communications Workers of America Locals 2108, 2100, and 6215 (ZeniMax Workers United-CWA) — announced that they have reached a tentative contract agreement with the company. ZeniMax Workers United-CWA and Microsoft have been negotiating for a first contract for nearly two years.

“QA workers from across the country continue to lead the charge for industry-wide change,” said Page Branson, Senior II QA Tester and ZeniMax Workers United-CWA bargaining committee member. “Going toe-to-toe with one of the largest corporations in the world isn’t a small feat. This is a monumental victory for all current video game workers and for those that come after.”

“Video games have been the revenue titan of the entire entertainment industry for years, and the workers who develop these games are too often exploited for their passion and creativity. Organizing unions, bargaining for a contract, and speaking with one collective voice has allowed workers to take back the autonomy we all deserve,” said Jesse Leese, QA tester at ZeniMax and ZeniMax Workers United-CWA bargaining committee member. “Our first contract is an invitation for video game professionals everywhere to take action. We’re the ones who make these games, and we’ll be the ones to set new standards for fair treatment.”

“Workers in the video game industry are demonstrating once again that collective power works. This agreement shows what’s possible when workers stand together and refuse to accept the status quo,” said CWA President Claude Cummings Jr. “Whether it’s having a say about the use of AI in the workplace, fighting for significant wage increases and fair crediting policies, or protecting workers from retaliation, our members have raised the bar. We’re proud to support them every step of the way.”

The new contract sets new standards for the industry and includes substantial across-the-board wage increases as well as new minimum salaries for workers. The agreement also includes protections against arbitrary dismissal, grievance procedures, and a crediting policy that clearly acknowledges the QA workers’ contributions to the video games they help create. It also incorporates a previously announced agreement on how artificial intelligence is introduced and implemented in the workplace.

“Our members knew what they deserved to make the industry a better place and fought for a tentative agreement that reflects the value they bring to the table,” said CWA Local 2100 President Nick Riddle. “Their victory is a win for us all, to show what can be possible through solidarity and collective bargaining.”

“This tentative agreement reflects workers’ deep commitment to equity and respect in a field that has long undervalued their contributions and exploited their passions. And they did it by holding the line together,” said CWA Local 2108 President Johnny Brown. “We’re proud to have them in our ranks as leaders for the entire labor movement.”

“Even amidst a rapidly evolving industry with significant volatility and job insecurity, video game workers never lost sight of what they de-

served,” said CWA Local 6215 Vice President Alex Doblado. “We celebrate their commitment to building a better future through collective action. They are a testament to the power of unions.”

Contract explanation meetings will be held for members over the next few weeks, and a ratification vote is expected to be concluded by June 20.

“Organizing an entire workplace and fighting for a first contract takes resilience and determination. Their hard work has laid the foundation for what’s next at Microsoft,” said CWA District 2-13 Vice President Mike Davis. “I look forward to the strong contract that we’ll secure with other video game studios in the months to come. This is just the beginning.”

“Taking on one of the largest tech companies in the world and winning real gains on improving the workplace is no small feat,” said CWA District 6 Vice President Derrick Osobase. “No matter how complex or powerful the employer may seem, collective action works. These workers have earned this victory and are opening the door for future worker-organizers.”

Over 2,000 Microsoft video game workers have joined CWA under a groundbreaking neutrality agreement that enables them to freely and fairly make a choice about union representation.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 19, 2025

Satya Nadella
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

Dear Mr. Nadella:

I’m writing you regarding ongoing contract negotiations with Microsoft workers who have joined together and formed a union affiliated with the Communications Workers of America (CWA). Specifically, I am writing to urge you to negotiate in good faith to sign a fair first contract that provides better pay, benefits and working conditions for these union workers as soon as possible.

As you know, I was pleased when, nearly three years ago, Microsoft and CWA reached an agreement to ensure that workers would have the opportunity to form a union free from intimidation, fear, and coercion that far too often takes place in large corporations throughout America. Organizing a union provides many benefits to workers, including a real voice on the job and the opportunity to secure a better quality of life, while also benefiting companies, through lower turnover and improved employee morale.


Unfortunately, it is my understanding that none of the workers who have chosen to organize a union have been able to secure a first collective bargaining agreement and that negotiations have proceeded too slowly. In my view, that is absolutely unacceptable. It should not take three years for workers to receive a first union contract, especially at a corporation that has pledged union neutrality.

I have personally heard from a number of these workers, who expressed concerns to me about several issues important in their working lives that need to be addressed, including better wages, a fair deal for temporary employees, and ensuring a workable arrangement for remote work as needed. They also conveyed to me a concern that Microsoft has not been making a real effort to secure a fair contract in a timely way.

As you know, Microsoft is not a poor company. It is not going broke. Last year, Microsoft made over \$88 billion in profits up nearly 22 percent from the previous year. If Microsoft can afford to spend \$60 billion on stock buybacks this fiscal year and could afford to give you a 63 percent pay raise last year and a \$79.1 million compensation package, it can afford to treat all of its workers with the respect and dignity they deserve.

I urge you to work quickly and in a productive manner to secure a first contract with union workers at Microsoft that provides them with the wages, benefits and working conditions that they deserve and that Microsoft can clearly afford to pay.

Sincerely,


Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

FCC Passes Verizon's \$20 Billion Frontier Deal After DEI Rollback

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has approved Verizon Communications' \$20 billion acquisition of fiber-optic provider, Frontier Communications, following the telecom giant's decision to rollback its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs.



The deal was first announced in September last year and sees Verizon purchasing Frontier for \$9.6 billion, while absorbing \$10 billion in Frontier's debt.

The FCC's green light comes after Verizon committed to internal policy shifts on corporate DEI efforts.

Verizon stated in a letter to the FCC commissioner: "Verizon has a long history of serving all members in the communities where we operate, which has been a competitive business advantage and enables long-term shareholder value.

"Delivering for customers requires attracting the best talent from across the country. We are committed to creating a culture that leverages and values each person's unique strengths and talents. These values have been fundamental to our Verizon culture since our founding 25 years ago.

"However, we recognize that the regulatory and policy landscape surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") has changed. The Supreme Court, the President's Executive Orders, and federal mandates require changes in the way companies approach DEI issues moving forward.

"In response to this changing landscape, Verizon has been evaluating its DEI-related programs, HR processes, supplier programs, training programs and materials, and other initiatives. In doing so, Verizon recognizes that some DEI policies and practices could be associated with discrimination.

"For that reason, Verizon reaffirms its commitment to equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination and is modifying its practices and ending its DEI related policies as described below. Verizon is making these changes to its practices not just in name or in the way they are described, but in substance. These changes are effective immediately."

The changes will see Verizon remove DEI language from employee resources, eliminate diversity hiring targets and remove DEI-linked incentives from executive compensation.

"Verizon recognizes that some DEI policies and practices could be associated with discrimination," said chief legal officer Vandana Venkatesh.

CWA released the following statement responding to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approval of Verizon's acquisition of Frontier:

With the acquisition of Frontier by Verizon, workers at Frontier have a more stable outlook for their jobs after years of inadequate investment and mismanagement. Verizon has committed to significant investment in fiber upgrades across the Frontier footprint. CWA has also negotiated significant improvements to bring work in-house from contractors in some areas, with hopes to make more progress in-sourcing work to support union jobs. While FCC Chair Carr sought to distract from substantive merger review by making Verizon's diversity, equity, and inclusion policies a rhetorical target, CWA members know that a union contract is always the strongest and most enforceable protection for workers. CWA will continue to engage directly with Verizon to ensure workers' rights, dignity, and equality of opportunity are protected.



Join Us June 6 to Rally for America's Veterans

America made a promise to its veterans—a promise we must keep.

On Friday, June 6, 2025, we're calling on all veterans, military families, and allies to stand united on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. for the Unite for Veterans, Unite for America Rally.

We're coming together to defend the benefits, jobs, healthcare, and dignity that every generation of veterans has earned through their sacrifice.

Veteran services are under attack—and we won't stand by.

Join thousands of voices demanding respect and action.

Rally Details:

When: Friday, June 6, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM ET

Where: National Mall, Washington, D.C.

Location: Just north of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, where 6th Street crosses the Mall

The Union Plus "Explore Iconic American Cities"

Our friends at Union Plus are back with another way to help union families explore more, save big, and make unforgettable memories along the way. This time? It's all about America's most iconic cities.

Think a slice of pizza in NYC, cherry blossom trees swaying in D.C., the sunset over the Santa Monica pier, live jazz in New Orleans.

Enter the Union Plus Explore Iconic American Cities Sweepstakes for your chance to win a \$5,000 cash prize *plus* a hotel stay at Hotel Rumbao in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico courtesy of the Union Plus Hotel Discounts Program.

It's one more reason we're proud to team up with Union Plus, whose travel benefits are built just for union families, making adventures like this more affordable, more accessible, and more fun.

To enter, go to: <https://unionplus.click/e25e>

Deadline to enter is June 6, 2025



Union-Made in America Father's Day

Celebrate your dad in solidarity style this Father's Day by getting him a gift that sports the union label. Check out some union-made Father's Day gift ideas:

Don't forget to text MADE to 235246 for more union-made-in-America product lists.

Clothing and Accessories

Hugo Boss
Joseph Abboud Clothing
Naturalizer shoes
Old Spice
Pierre Cardin cologne
Red Wing Shoes
The Union Boot Pro
Timex watches



Tools

Armstrong
Stanley Black & Decker
Klein Tools
Lawn-Boy

Cookware and Grilling

Thermador grills
Weber grills
All-Clad
Anchor Hocking
Cutco knives
Fiesta tableware
KitchenAid
Durex Maverick Barbecue Tools
Igloo coolers

Sporting Equipment

NordicTrack
American Athletic
MacGregor Golf clubs
Standard Golf
Top-Flite golf balls
Louisville Slugger
Spalding basketball

If you're thinking of splurging, spring for some game-day tickets so you can watch your favorite baseball players, who are members of the Major League Baseball Players Association, and make sure dear old dad gets a heaping cup of ice cold beer, many are produced, such as Anheuser Busch, Miller, Coors, Leinenkugel's and Natural Light by our brothers and sisters in the CWA-IUE, IAM, Teamsters, the IBT, the UAW, and the IUOE.

Stuff the Bus - School Supply Drive

Thousands of students every year start school without essential supplies for academic success. Moreover, teachers spend hundreds of dollars out of their own pockets annually to stock their classrooms properly.

Education is essential to unlocking a student's potential and achieving financial success. However, for many families in the National Capital Area, the cost of buying school supplies can be a significant burden. By providing backpacks and school supplies, United Way of the National Capital Area sets students up for academic success, while increasing the economic opportunity of students' families.

CWA Local 2108 is asking you to make a positive impact on a local middle school student by participating in the United Way NCA's Stuff the Bus campaign for the upcoming 2025-26 school year by providing school supplies to middle schools students in DC and surrounding counties in Northern Virginia and Maryland.

This year, there are three ways to participate:

- Purchase and donate a gift from our Amazon Wish List
- Volunteer to stuff backpacks full of school supplies for students at our in-person volunteer event.
- Make a monetary contribution.

Please go to: <https://unitedwaynca.org/stuff-the-bus> for complete details!!



United Way of
the National Capital Area

Personals

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

Retiree, **Thomas Trolia**, who passed away on May 29, 2025.

Welcome to Local 2108



New Member

Ken Singleton
Nicholas Sierra



Congratulations to Recent Retiree:

Venus Williams

Verizon Contract Extension Talks Begin May 29th

As you know, the current collective bargaining agreement with Verizon and CWA does not expire until August 2026, a little less than 14 months from now.

Last month, Verizon approached CWA and the IBEW about entering into two weeks of bargaining beginning May 29, 2025 to determine whether it is possible to agree on the terms of a contract extension. CWA District 2-13 Vice President Mike Davis then contacted the Mid-Atlantic bargaining committee and all District 2-13 Local Presidents to get a consensus on whether or not to explore this proposal since the terms of the negotiations would be limited in scope. It was decided that we would entertain discussions with Verizon over a contract extension and potentially avoid the contentious bargaining sessions we have experienced over the past years. As more information becomes available, we will post updates on our website (www.cwalocal2108.org) and on our Facebook page.

Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out these important workshops presented by **Nettworth Financial Group** to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

CWA District 2-13 Retirement Benefits

Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Fairfax, VA—Call for location

CWA District 2-13 Retirement Benefits

Thursday, June 12, 2025 @ 6:30PM

Odenton, MD—Call for location

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call Nettworth at (800)-859-2212, or register online at :

<http://www.nettworth.net/event/marylanddcvirginia>

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

Congressional Allies Introduce Bill to Protect Striking Workers' Healthcare



When working people risk everything to hold employers accountable through the power of the strike, unscrupulous corporations resort to strike-breaking tactics like threatening to cancel families' health insurance.

Last week, Representatives Chris Deluzio and Sarah McBride took action to level the playing field by reintroducing the Striking and Locked Out Workers Healthcare Protection Act. The bill would make it an unfair labor practice to cut or alter workers' health

insurance while they are on strike or locked out and hold employers accountable with increasing civil monetary penalties.

"CWA members at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and all across the country know all too well the power of corporations that hold our healthcare hostage. It is totally unconscionable for a company to cut off workers' healthcare—putting the health of workers and their families in jeopardy—in retaliation for them standing up to protect their rights and dignity on the job. CWA is proud to support the Striking and Locked Out Workers Healthcare Protection Act and thanks Representatives Deluzio and McBride for their fearless leadership in standing up to protect workers' healthcare and rights," said CWA Director of Government Affairs Dan Mauer.

"No company should be able to hold a worker's health—or the well-being of their family—hostage during a labor dispute," said Representative Deluzio. "We need a level playing field, and this bill puts the act of ripping health insurance away from striking workers out of bounds."

"No worker should be forced to choose between exercising their right to strike and protecting their family's health," said Representative McBride. "When employers cut off health care during a strike or lock-out, they aren't negotiating. Workers deserve a voice at the table without having their lives or livelihoods held hostage."

Local 2108 Calendar

JUNE 2025

- 11 RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 Membership Meeting - 6:00pm
Local Office, Beltsville, MD

15 Father's Day
Happy Father's Day



19 Juneteenth

JULY 2025

4 Independence Day
Local Office Closed



- 9 RMC 2108 Meeting - Cancelled
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 9 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: RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, June 11, 2025 - 11:00am
Membership Meeting. - Wednesday, June 11, 2025 - 6:00pm



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Tamera Nelson - Secretary-Treasurer
LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President

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