

To the Editor:

As President of the Communications Workers of America, Local 4900, we take great pride in representing almost 4000 workers throughout Indiana. These are middle class Americans who have achieved that status via collective bargaining with their employers. We are not a greedy bunch, as many say; we only ask to share in the success of the companies we work for. Currently, we are working without a contract with AT&T. They are insisting on massive increases in what we already pay for our healthcare package; so I ask?

Why is it okay for AT&T, a profitable company, that's leading the industry, to cut workers' health care benefits and while giving our CEO and his family free health care for life?

Answer: It's not okay.

AT&T wants to triple what some of us pay for health care, even though it earned \$12.9 billion in profits last year, more than \$3 billion in the first quarter of this year, and turned in an outstanding first quarter performance, according to Wall Street.

AT&T is trying to use the bad economy as an excuse to cut our families' standard of living. That's not right. As AT&T employees, we're proud of the work we do and we're proud that our company is successful.

Instead of shifting even more health care costs to workers and retirees on fixed incomes, AT&T should get behind the effort for real national health care reform. Not only would it save about \$600 million a year and give a good return to shareholders, but it would be stopping the free ride that some companies get by not contributing at all to employee – and family – health care.

This action by AT&T simply equates to modern corporate greed. The money taken out of these middle class paychecks would mean lost revenue for hundreds of communities across Indiana and thousands more across the country.

So remember, next time an AT&T worker is walking thru the rain and weather to get your internet, video-cable TV, or home phone line repaired; or you talk to the voice on the line trying to resolve your problems, these are middle class Americans fighting to stay that way against corporate giants that believe their pockets need more.

Respectfully,

Tim Strong, President

CWA Local 4900