

Vermont Legislative Meeting

Thursday 8/24/06 5:30 PM

Tonight a meeting with Vermont Legislative leaders was held at the IBEW training center.

In attendance were:

Gaye Symington: VT Legislature's Speaker of the House
Floyd Nease: VT Legislature's Assistant Majority Leader
Kathy Keenan: House Commerce Committee Chair
Francis Brooks: House General, Housing & Military Affairs Committee Chair
Ralph Montefusco: CWA Alliance at IBM Organizer
Darlene Stone: CWA Local 1400 Chief Steward
Mike O'Day: CWA Local 1400 District 7 VP

Many thanks to these tireless legislators for attending this after work meeting to discuss the proposed sale of access lines in Vermont.

Intro: Presentation by Mike O'Day regarding potential sale to Fairpoint Communications; pitfalls of selling to an undercapitalized company, the impact on service quality and inability to grow broadband with shortage of capital. Review of past meeting with Gov Douglas.

Darlene prepared an information package for each attendee, which included position papers from CWA and IBEW, letters from other politicians seeking more information from CEO Ivan Seidenburg and a recent coup: a letter from Gov. Jim Douglas putting Verizon on notice that he would not recommend the Dept of Public Service to approve the sale of Verizon unless the new buyer were committed to quality service at affordable rates; properly financed and were going to value their employees.

Speaker of the House Gaye Symington recognized the time sensitive nature of the proposed sale and agreed to convene the Commerce Committee, chaired by Kathy Keenan, to review the economic impact of a sale.

House Asst Majority Leader Floyd Nease stated that the sale could be a disaster for Vermonters. He asked for a copy of our petition to circulate amongst fellow legislators.

The highlight of the evening was Speaker Symington committing to send a letter and poll to her fellow legislators to ask for their support to call for an economic impact study. Gaye will be in contact with President Pro Tempore Peter Welch to conduct a similar poll with state senators.

This meeting was arranged by Ralph Montefusco, who can not be thanked enough for his tireless support of Verizon workers. His ability to pull these remarkable people together to get things done is truly remarkable.

We look forward to the Commerce Committee meeting to discuss the proposed sale in late September.

In Solidarity,

Mike O'Day