

Local President Script VA Bargaining Survey Meeting

INTRODUCTION

Brothers and sisters, welcome to the Local [Number] VA Bargaining Survey Meeting. Please sign in at the front, and make sure we have your up-to-date cell phone and home email. There are lots of changes happening quickly, and you need to be up-to-date and involved.

We are here today to talk about our contract negotiations.

Let me ask, by show of hands, who here has heard about what is in the Department proposals for our contract?

For those that have seen it, you know the VA proposal is to gut our contract and our rights in the workplace. Our Union is VA employees standing by each other to protect one another and the work we do. If they weaken our Union, they weaken the whole VA.

The game plan is to weaken our Union, go after employees, cripple the VA and privatize the VA.

THEY WANT TO PRIVATIZE THE VA

Let me explain how:

Who knows best how to do the work and take care of the veterans? Is it the people who do the work or the people who sit at a desk and don't ever interact with the veterans? It is us. And For decades, front line employees of the VA have had a say about quality of care and best practices and had a voice about how to do the work. They want to get rid of it. We've been pushing or them to fill the 49,000 vacancies. They won't do it. We are fighting as hard as we can for the VA and the work we do, and if they can shut us down, take away our voice, make it easy to fire us so there is nobody left to do the work, they can privatize the VA.

HOW ARE THEY GOING TO DO IT?

- They propose deleting 42 of 66 Articles in our contract and stripping nearly all representation rights we currently have.
- Remove all contractual limitations on contracting out our work- they want to privatize the VA

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- All bargained rights over child care, details, temporary promotions, reassignments, shift changes, relocations, telework CWS/AWS- gone.
- Official time is decimated- reduced 99%. They want to kick the Union out of the facility.
- They want to lock the contract in for 10 years but be allowed to make any changes they see fit.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Have you ever used AWS/CWS?

They can take it away- poof- gone.

Telework?

Gone.

Right to grieve a discipline?

Gone.

Right for our local to file a grievance?

Gone.

Union offices?

Gone.

Union right to block contracting out?

Gone.

To be clear- if the VA gets what they want, we won't have a Union, they can fire us whenever they want, and privatize the whole VA.

THE UNION ANSWER

We can't win this fight by relying upon Title 5, the law. The deck is stacked at the FLRA- we have seen the Federal government refuse to enforce the law, change the law when they get a chance and rule against employees every chance they get. And the FLRA have found ways to rubber stamp every contract a union busting agency has proposed.

To win this fight, we need a new strategy.

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We must engage every employee by sharing information, listening to their concerns and asking them to stand up together and defend their livelihoods and the wonderful work they do. These are our livelihoods, our careers, our workplaces, our contract, our rights our union.

Our power comes from speaking with one voice and taking action together.

Now, I know getting everybody involved isn't what we've always done. But we are going to have to do that now. It will be a hard lift, but, like I said, the way we've done it in the past won't work in this fight.

THE ASK

Ask yourself, do you want to add your voice to over 260,00 VA employees fighting to protect our jobs and improve the VA?

If the answer is yes, raise your hand.

Ok, great. I'd like everybody to fill out this survey letting us know what **THREE THINGS** are most important to you in this contract fight. We are fighting back on all of this, but you need to have a voice on what matters most to you.

You also need to put your contact information on the survey. There will be a lot of updates on what is happening and what you need to do to protect your job.

Good job taking a first step, today. It's union time! It's time to build our power