

The Associated Press bargaining team:

We, the members of The Associated Press Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego staff, care deeply about the quality of our journalism and the AP's reputation as the world's pre-eminent news organization.

We also know the company has been looking for ways to save money in difficult times, which is why we have made significant concessions during previous negotiations. We have given up our pensions and, in some previous years, gone without raises. But you are asking far too much from us this time.

\_ Your health-care proposal would add thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket annual maximum costs for every staffer, something that will shatter already tight budgets. What individual on our salaries can afford an additional annual increase of \$3,750? What family can afford to pay \$7,500 more? On top of that, you would have us pay more for prescription drugs and assess arbitrary surcharges of \$600 per year for every individual who fails to meet certain health criteria, something that is clearly ageist and discriminatory toward people with pre-existing medical conditions.

\_ Forcing AP employees to transfer to other cities would create a hardship not only for us, but for our spouses and children. Those of us who would choose not to uproot our lives would struggle even more if we agreed to the reduced severance proposal you have presented.

\_ The offer of annual pay raises of 1.5 percent, 1.75 percent and 2 percent actually represent a decrease in salary because they will not keep up with inflation. After years of insignificant raises, or no raises at all, we are looking for real gains this year -- gains that the company's own statements indicate it can afford.

\_ Photographers who use their personal vehicles for work are providing the AP with mobile offices, something for which even current mileage reimbursements do not cover adequately for the wear and tear. They should not lose that weekly mileage allowance. All of these proposals would take an unacceptable toll on our incomes and quality of life. We are doing our part in providing quality work to the AP, often working long hours and making ourselves available at any hour that we are needed. All we are asking in return is a fair contract, and what you are proposing is not one.

Respectfully,  
Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego AP staff members  
John Rogers  
Gillian Flaccus  
John Antczak  
Daisy Nguyen  
Damian Dovarganes  
Julie Watson

Greg Bull  
Justin Pritchard  
Linda Deutsch  
Mark Terrill  
Tony Kee  
Robert Jablon  
Ryan Pearson  
Chris Weber  
Sandy Cohen  
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Anthony McCartney  
Alex Veiga  
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