

Oct. 16, 2013

Dear Associated Press bargaining team:

We work hard for the AP and care deeply about the quality of our journalism. Like you, we also care about the quality of our lives. We have made many significant concessions in past contracts, particularly in the last round of negotiations, because we believe in this company and want to see it succeed. But the AP's latest proposals seek concessions that we simply cannot give. Here are some of our concerns:

\_ The health care proposal would add thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket maximums that will shatter the already tight budgets of workers. What individual can afford an additional \$3,750 hit? What family can afford \$7,500? And there are other new costs for prescription drugs and failure to meet certain health criteria. It's too much to ask.

\_ Forcing AP employees to transfer would create a hardship not only for us, but for our spouses, children and others in our communities who rely on us. Those of us who choose not to uproot our lives would struggle even more if we agreed to the reduced severance proposal.

\_ The AP's offer of annual pay raises of 1.5 percent, 1.75 percent and 2 percent would cost us even more by failing to cover inflation. We're looking for real gains this year -- gains that the company's own statements indicate it can afford.

\_ With their vehicles, photographers provide the AP with mobile offices and shuttles for reporters. Here in Arizona, many of their trips are taken on dirt roads into rugged wilderness. Mileage costs alone don't cover that wear and tear. They need the daily allowance that would be ended by the proposed contract.

All of these proposals would take an unacceptable toll on our incomes and quality of life. We want a fair contract that acknowledges our hard work and dedication amid major cutbacks.

Respectfully,

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