INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD of ELECTRICAL WORKERS
LOCAL UNION 29

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IBEW 29 members,

I apologize in advance for the lengthy letter, but our membership needs to take the time to read the message below and be aware of the extremely important challenges we will be facing this year. As most of you know, our current Collective Bargaining Agreement expires on September 30, 2026. As in most contract years, tension between the Company and Union typically increases. However, unlike previous contract years, the tension between the Union and Company has been escalating at an alarming rate over the past year.

The source of that tension has mainly been due to disagreements between the parties over the use of subcontractors, major safety concerns which have gone unresolved, and the implementation of multiple technological initiatives (both for field and office personnel) that have failed to deliver the desired outcome and lack usability for our workforce. Furthermore, these technological changes have had negative impacts on our members' working conditions and the Company has failed to negotiate any of these changes with Union leadership as agreed upon in our CBA. This has forced the Union to challenge these technological initiatives by going to arbitration twice in the last year alone.

As stated above, one of the most important reasons for the escalated tension between the Company and the Union is due to the Company failing to address major safety issues, that have been raised by our members and our Union leadership, in a timely manner. A big example of this is when our entire membership (Field ops, T&D, Distribution Technicians, Customer Care, etc.), along with Union leadership, raised the inaccessibility and inaccuracy of circuit maps with ArcFM. That is on top of the lack of training and functionality issues that our members faced with these implemented technologies.

When the Company did not acknowledge our concerns, our members were forced to rely on outdated maps to perform their work. During the April 29th storm event, despite the outdated and unreliable systems, our members went above and beyond to keep each other safe and restore our customer's service as quickly and safely as possible. Our members worked flawlessly

in dangerous conditions, faced with numerous roadblocks and issues created by these new technologies. Unfortunately, the Company did not address your feedback during the after-action meetings, and the only way we could force the Company to correct this major safety issue was by filing an OSHA complaint.

The safety of our members is the top priority of this Union. It is the primary reason that Henry Miller established the IBEW back in 1891. During that time, one out every two-lineman were killed on the job. We have come a long way since then but continue to face some of the same dangers those IBEW members faced.

Late in 2025, the Union leadership was asked to participate and work with Proudfoot; the current consultant the Company has brought on property to help fix the safety culture. After a few sessions with Proudfoot, the Union was engaged and hopeful that we were on our way to changing the safety culture for our members. Unfortunately, like many consultants before (Caterpillar, DuPont, Rob Fisher, MSU, Sean Galloway, etc.), the Union is fearful that once the consultant has identified the multiple issues present on property today, (which Proudfoot has done a phenomenal job at) the consultant will leave without the Company implementing any change or positive impact to both safety and operational excellence.

Recently we had one of our members sustain a serious injury at Penn Hills service center. The member was initially left in limbo and told he was denied both workman's compensation and NOI&I from the Company. The Company failed to provide a workman's compensation denial letter for days, leading to our member getting delayed medical treatment. This also will result in our member not receiving any compensation for around 8 weeks. The Union strongly urged the Company to reconsider the denials of both compensations and while we were successful in getting the members' NOI&I approved, we continue to fight to get this member workman's compensation squared away. However, in true fashion, the Company decided to then issue a 30-day suspension to that member for horseplay. The Union is extremely disappointed to say the least. The irony of sitting in Proudfoot sessions, where the Company leadership claims to want to change the safety culture and witnessing how they handle safety issues day to day, is beyond discouraging and proves that we are nowhere near where we need to be with our safety culture.

The Union feels there is a double standard on accountability on this property. The Union is held to a standard that they do not hold their own leadership too. On one hand, we had a perfectly good employee with a clean record, who unfortunately made a mistake and injured his knee which resulted in the member receiving 30-day suspension. Yet on the Company side, you had decisions being made about our mapping system, at all levels of leadership, that led to an increased risk to all our field employees or the risk of someone in the public being severely injured or killed with no sign of accountability.

I had a seasoned lineman in Edison ask me "Why is it that anytime a Union member makes a mistake, we need to be accountable. But anytime the Company makes a mistake, it is treated as a lesson learned." His statement is completely accurate and speaks to the double standard stated above. I also had a Journey Splicer say to me recently that "this Company doesn't care about safety; they care about compliance." I could not agree more with that statement and believe most, if not all our membership feel the same way.

I am not writing to you to preach on the multiple labor issues. I am asking that all of you continue to do the right thing and avoid giving the Company any reason to use discipline to distract us as we focus on the tough year ahead.

As stated previously, this is a pivotal year for this Union. We are fighting for the survival of our existence. This local has been under constant attack from this Company continually trying to eliminate our jobs by increasing the number of sub-contractors, creating and posting newly created non-union positions that are very similar to existing Union jobs, and by implementing new technology without negotiating with the Union. I want to give a summary of our key issues, so everyone is aware of what the Union leadership is focused on going into 2026 and more importantly our upcoming negotiations.

The Union and Company have strongly disagreed with the excessive use of subcontractors year after year, and the supplementation of our workforce by the Company. In early October, the Union appealed a grievance to arbitration which will be in March. The grievance is related to the Company not filling/creating full-time positions in accordance with our CBA, due to the increased workload projected over the next decade. Instead, the Company would rather increase the use of subcontractors, to the detriment of not only our Union, but the consumers as well. This decision will be vital to ending the long-standing contracting out dispute between the parties as we enter negotiations.

The Company has also created multiple new non-union jobs that infringe on bargaining unit work. An example would be the Customer Relations Associate who interacts with customers, through email, phone calls, and social media. The Union filed a grievance that this newly created job is performing CSR work and will be going to arbitration this April.

Finally, the Company continues to utilize new technology without negotiating with the Union. An example of this new technology is the utilization of drones to inspect or troubleshoot a right of way. I want to be perfectly clear; the Union leadership team embraces this new technology. This new "tool" would make our members more efficient and more importantly, safer while performing their work. Our members would be able to detect an issue faster and without walking a long, dangerous right of way by simply flying a drone to locate and identify issues. Unfortunately, the Union was not involved in these initial discussions and were forced to

arbitrate the issue in December, when the Company decided that this "new work" was not within our jurisdiction and that company personnel could perform this troubleshooting and inspections of right of ways. We are awaiting the arbitrators' ruling on this matter.

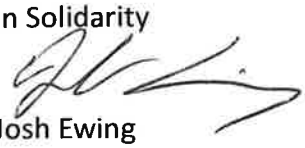
Another example of new technology negatively impacting our members' jobs is the multiple new processes and technology being implemented in the customer care group. These changes have led to six vacant positions not being filled for the CSRs, TSRs, and Customer Service Clerk positions. Most recently, when one of our Union officers challenged a new process that led to a possible safety issue, the entire Union leadership team, as well as many Directors of this Company, were told by an Executive Leader that the solution to solving this problem is to automate the process. That statement makes it very clear what the Company's intentions are.

The Union is currently scheduling our annual "Informational Meetings" that our held near all service centers. These meetings are scheduled to report on this past year and what is planned for this upcoming year. I strongly urge that all available members plan to attend one of these meetings to not only hear from Union leadership, but also give us feedback on what issues you are facing and listen to any suggestions you may have to help change this work environment for the better. The postings on dates, times, and locations will be available within the next week. These meetings are open for all members to attend at any location that is convenient to you. We also plan on sending out a similar survey that we have done for previous negotiations to all members for suggestions on our upcoming contract. Look for those surveys sometime in the next two months.

Last contract, the biggest complaint I heard was the lack of communication from the Union leadership to the members during those contract talks. I plan on improving on that this year by contacting you all via letter and/or by short videos giving updates. We are currently in talks with a new vendor for an updated and more user-friendly website that will help us communicate more effectively and timely with our members.

In closing, I reiterate that this contract year is probably the most important contract year we have faced in decades. I also want to state that unlike the Company, this Union is a bottom-up organization. Our strength comes from the rank-and-file members on the front lines every day, not from the top down. I want to thank all of you for the work that you do and ask that each of you continue to work safely. As we enter this new year, we need to stand together in this fight for our survival.

In Solidarity



Josh Ewing
Business Manager