

Communications

LOCAL 2252



Workers of America

(AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO)

2915 Hunter Mill Rd., Suite 13
Oakton, Va. 22124

(703) 255-2351 FAX (703) 255-0578

March 11, 2020

Sent via Email, USPS and Certified Mail

TO: President Chris Shelton

RE: Proposed relocation of DCA Piedmont group from Local 2252 to Local 2201 and Safety and Mutual Respect Concerns

Many members our Executive Board and general membership feel harassed, bullied, degraded, intimidated, discriminated against and belittled by numerous members of the DCA Piedmont group. We feel that we have suffered physical and mental stress and verbal abusive on numerous occasions. They have repeatedly displayed unprofessional behavior, hostility, insults and verbal intimidation. Members have stated they are afraid for not only their safety but my safety and the safety of our Executive Board, which primarily consists of woman. Many members are afraid to attend our general membership meetings due to either witnessing or being advised of this hostile environment created by the DCA Piedmont members.

On numerous occasions many DCA Piedmont members have made it very clear that they do not want to be a part of our local. Their discrimination is particularly directed toward anyone working for American Airlines and AT&T and women they perceive not of color.

I believe that the entire local has been affected by their display of negative attitudes and threatening behavior and this has thrown the local membership into an atmosphere of dissension. Our Executive Board and local has been subjected to bullying, harassment, unwelcome conduct which has created a hostile, intimidating and oppressive environment which is undignified.

Their actions have put our local in disrepute and their intentional disrespect and willful disobedience has harmed this local.

I was elected into this position as the President of Local 2252 and I will do anything and everything I can to run this local with the best interest to unify the entire membership. I have been actively seeking a solution and I believe that there is only 1 viable solution; a solution that doesn't include bringing numerous members up on charges and causing more dissension and accusations of racism. The solution includes the movement of the DCA Piedmont group out of LOCAL 2252 and into Local 2201. This solution has been agreed upon with full disclosure and voted on and agreed upon by Local 2201 and 2252's Executive Boards. This solution controls and limits any chance of impropriety or misappropriation of funds and limits the ability of destroying any local. The longest standing members of our local are in the private sector and in a Right to work State (VA) and these members are here by choice.

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Many of these long-standing members are questioning why they would want to stay in a union without unity. The CWA cannot jeopardize losing ANY members because of a small fraction of people determined to destroy our local. Therefore, the only viable option I can conclude is to move the DCA Piedmont members to Local 2201. This is an option that our previous President achieved without resistance from our District when he moved a portion of our American Airline membership (the HBR group) to Local 2201.

The positive result of this move would be that the DCA Piedmont group would only represent the members in their station where they work every day. There would be no need for DCA Piedmont leadership to travel to "visit" other stations, thus, they would not be able to spread hate and dissension to the other Piedmont stations because they would not be in the same local. Local 2201 which will be losing all their home-based reservation agents would gain approximately 360 members to add to their approximately 2400 membership. Local 2201 is an established, well run and experienced local with the willingness and ability to take on this group. We feel this transfer of employees is in the best interest of everyone involved.

I, along with Barbara Belz, the Secretary/Treasurer of Local 2252, met with our District Vice President Ed Mooney and our Staff Rep. Pam Tronsor to discuss this matter on Tuesday and Wednesday the 21st and 22nd of January. While Mr. Mooney made some beneficial suggestions, Barbara and I were disappointed, appalled, and frightened by some of the remarks and suggestions that were made by Mr. Mooney. On numerous occasions Mr. Mooney recommended the use of physical violence by myself and my members towards the members that were being abusive towards us. Mr. Mooney told me to go to the DCA airport and go to the Local 2252 Area Vice President for Piedmont and "punch her the f--- out.". He also made an inappropriate sexual hand gesture simulating self-ejaculation. Mr. Mooney told us that he told Gwen Ivey, the President for Local 13301, who was having problems with a Local 3645 Officer who was interfering in her Local business to "fly to Charlotte and punch her the f--- out" as well.

This conversation made Barbara and I very uncomfortable even while I attempted to make the conversation lighter by asking him if he would pay our legal fees when we were arrested for Assault and Battery. This however is not a funny matter even though Mr. Mooney was laughing while we sat there with horrified looks on our faces. Additionally, Mr. Mooney made another very disturbing comment where he stated, "I've never hit a woman Before". This was perceived by us that this could and may possibly happen.

Barbara and I felt that Mr. Mooney's tone was one of contempt and disgust towards us. The conversation went from bad to worse. Again, on numerous occasions Mr. Mooney shouted at me in a very hostile, demeaning and condescending manner saying, "just answer Yes or No, I don't want to hear excuses!!". In the presence of the three of us, Mr. Mooney referenced the death of our Staff Rep Pam Tronsor saying, "if you died, you would be lucky if I put 1 flower at your grave". Mr. Mooney disparaged all of us and accused us of not doing our job and as such insinuated and made us feel that this abuse was somehow our fault.

Mr. Mooney's tone was primarily sarcastic, latent with name calling, primarily directed at Pam Tronsor, repeatedly calling her stupid and incompetent. Barbara and I believed Mr. Mooney was asserting dominance over us by making sure that we understood that in no uncertain terms that he was the one calling the shots and he was in no way going to allow our request to move forward. Mr. Mooney referenced a former Officer in his old Local who had run for re-election and told us

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"I didn't support him and that's why he isn't there anymore." Mr. Mooney then told Pam Tronsor "You're lucky you don't have to run for re-election like I do."

No one should be subjected to unwarranted dominant behavior, name-calling, being spoken to in a demeaning and belittling manner or in a sarcastic tone. Verbal abuse is when the abuser turns situations around putting the blame on the abused; use of constant criticism; belittling and treating that person demeaning manner; name-calling; threats and or suggestive behavior of threats; comments about someone's potential death and insults to openly doling out public humiliation and intimidation. We believe the abuser is fully aware and that these tactics are calculated in their approach to cause physical and mental harm and destroy one's self esteem. This verbal abuse slowly destroys your self-esteem making it more difficult for that person to reach out for help thus allowing the abuser to maintain their power and control over that person or persons. Verbal abuse affects your health physically and psychologically. The effects can range from anxiety and chronic depression to even post-traumatic stress disorder. In fact, this encounter with Mr. Mooney triggered a PTSD episode for Barbara Belz, who had previously been in a long standing abusive relationship.

We cannot reason with an abusive person or persons. Based on the incidents that took place and the verbal and mental abuse we suffered, we do not believe that there was any intent that Mr. Mooney was willing to work with us for a positive resolution. The abuse we are suffering from Mr. Mooney and some of the DCA Piedmont members are both physically and mentally exhausting and a form of workplace bullying and harassment. We all took an oath for mutual respect and I expect this to be adhere to by everyone including and especially by our CWA Leadership.

We urge the CWA to take this matter seriously and move swiftly to protect the integrity and safety of all its members including but not limited to the Executive Board of Local 2252. We all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the CWA and to promote, maintain and grow the union in an environment of mutual respect.

President Shelton, I would very much appreciate an answer to why there is a lack of mutual respect from our District Vice President and an answer regarding the movement of our DCA Piedmont membership to a local that has agreed to accept them. Again, our previous President moved members, in the same manner, without any opposition from our District Vice President so my board and I are questioning if this is personal or prejudicial in nature.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Thayer".

Cindy Thayer, President Local 2252

CC: Secretary-Treasurer Sara Steffens

District 2-13 Vice President Ed Mooney

Chief of Staff Jody Calemine