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Dear ABC Member:

NABET-CWA and ABC, Inc. have reached overall tentative agreement for a new four-year contract to replace the one that will expire on March 31, 2017. This letter contains only a brief explanation of some of the proposed – and agreed to – changes to the Master Agreement. The members of your bargaining committee are unanimously recommending that you vote to ratify the new agreement.

These negotiations, which began six months early, in September 2016, have concluded prior to the expiration of the current Master Agreement. This accomplishment has not been realized in recent decades - if ever – during the long standing relationship between your union and your employer.

If the contract is ratified by April 14<sup>th</sup> the first wage increase of 2 ½ % will become effective on April 1<sup>st</sup> and the subsequent annual increases will be 2 ½ %, 2%, and 2%, with the contract expiring March 31, 2021.

This bargaining process, like most, has been challenging. The contract offer is not ideal and is not without some noteworthy concessions. There are economic concessions, jurisdictional incursions, and there will be workforce reductions in some operations covered by the Master Agreement. During the course of the new contract, the Company will have the right to subcontract the work of the “P” Unit (Plant Maintenance) in Los Angeles. The 22 full-time staff members affected will be offered a Voluntary Separation Program (VSP), and the 18 daily hire members who may be separated from employment will be offered a severance package. (See Sideletter #6 [NEW] and Sideletter #12 [NEW]) In addition, daily hire employees working in the Los Angeles Network Distribution Operation will be offered a severance package when that work is moved to a consolidated program preparation/release to air facility, staffed currently by unrepresented Disney employees. Daily Hire employees working in the Prospect Stock Room and in New York Central Stores will also be offered severance packages when those operations are converted to self-service centers, and no longer staffed with NABET-represented employees.

There are a number of substantial improvements in this Tentative Agreement for both daily hire members and full-time staff. For the first time ever, Daily Hires will be eligible for short turnaround. Gaining this important provision for our daily hire members required a compromise, with the turnaround corridor being shortened to ten (10) hours. Additionally, many daily hire employees will now be eligible for paid sick leave. The ‘travel-only’ stipend will increase by nearly 4%, to \$270/day. Daily Hire employees will also enjoy more favorable qualifying thresholds for certain benefit entitlements, and in many areas, economic improvements in those benefits. A new feature in this contract for daily hires will be a choice between the CWA Savings and Retirement Trust (CWA SRT) or the Entertainment Industry 401(k) Plan.

Full-time staff employees who are participants in the ABC-NABET Retirement Trust will receive a retroactive “pop-up” in the accrual rate from the contractually mandated .65% to a bargained increase of 1.5%. In addition, full-time employees will be eligible for Disney’s *Child Bonding Leave* as well as *Main Entrance Pass* privileges at Disney Theme Parks.

Of course, there are several changes to the contract that are not as positive as those described above. Some jurisdictional provisions have been relaxed, particularly in the area of newsgathering, and the meal period on the production stage of *General Hospital* will become an unpaid one hour meal.

Our NABET-CWA represented Newswriters in Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco are being asked to consider a wage scale structure that will allow new staff employees to advance to the top scale only at Company discretion. Existing staff would not be affected and will remain unchanged from current requirements. Daily hire and staff Newswriters, Desk Assistants and Producers will receive annual wage increases. There will also be new modest incursions into Newswriter jurisdiction at all three stations. This compromise was reached in the face of Company proposals aimed at across the board wage freezes, as well as serious attacks on our jurisdiction at the stations.

Your bargaining committee was successful in persuading the Company to eliminate or moderate a number of the more corrosive proposals. For example, the night shift differential corridor has been preserved, but the differential payment has been reduced. The Company originally proposed a dramatic change in the Payment in Lieu of Benefits (PILB) which would have ultimately eliminated the employee discretionary feature. As a result of bargaining, and the strong feedback from the membership, which was addressed with the Company, the current PILB structure will change modestly. Additionally, in the last two years of the contract, the PILB will increase \$5/day and improved benefit choices will become available.

You now have before you a package that your bargaining committee is unanimously endorsing for ratification. We ask that you study the proposals carefully and cast your vote wisely. Many components in this package are “ratification incentives”, which means they will be effectuated only if the contract is ratified by April 14, 2017. If the agreement is not ratified, we believe that further improvements are unlikely without significant action and sacrifice from our ABC membership. The results of the ratification vote will be announced on April 14, 2017.

To get a more detailed picture of the full tentative agreement, members are advised to study the summary prepared by your bargaining committee and to view copies of the actual contract proposals which are available on the Sector website ([www.nabetcwa.org](http://www.nabetcwa.org)), or on Local websites.

Your committee thanks you for your confidence and for your support during this process.

In Unity,

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