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October 28, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Richard Trumka
President
AFL-CIO
815 16th St. NW
Washington, DC 20006

RE: Interactive Media Agreement Strike

Dear President Trumka:

I represent the nine videogame companies that have been bargaining with SAG-AFTRA for a new contract to cover their voiceover and on-camera performers and against whom SAG-AFTRA is now on strike. The Companies I represent are in the minority in their industry that is largely non-union. Indeed, my clients include the greatest advocates for the skill and talent of the performers represented by SAG-AFTRA. The people who sit on my side of the bargaining table have the utmost respect and admiration for the talented SAG-AFTRA members who contribute to the videogames that the public loves.

That is why notwithstanding far less expensive alternatives, my clients already pay scale wages ranging from \$103.19 per hour to \$412.75 per hour to Principal Performers who work on their games. You will agree that these sums compare quite favorably to the average workers which according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics currently stands at \$25.79 per hour. <http://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/ceseesummary.htm> Thus, even the lowest hourly rate provided for in the expired collective bargaining agreement is 4 times greater than the national average. These employees also get unionized health and retirement benefit contributions of 15.5%.

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However, contrary to the implication of your statement, my clients have not refused to bargain or offer even better terms and conditions. Our Final and Enhanced Comprehensive Package Proposal offers an immediate 9% wage increase and Additional Compensation that totals up to \$950 for Principal Performers who work eight sessions on a game, if our proposal is accepted and the new contract is ratified by December 1. In addition, we are offering improved pension and health benefits and improved cooperation on safety issues. You may review our entire proposal to SAG-AFTRA at www.sagaftravideogames.com.

I note that the AFL-CIO supports unionization to “Ensure Workers Have a Voice on the Job.” <http://www.aflcio.org/Multimedia/Videos/Unions-Ensure-Workers-Have-A-Voice-on-the-Job> That has been our view as well. We have been asking SAG-AFTRA to put our Final and Enhanced Comprehensive Package Proposal to a democratic vote of the effective membership. It is our belief that the performers who SAG-AFTRA is asking to strike will find that differences between our offer and the Union’s demands are not so significant that they are worth striking over.

SAG-AFTRA thus far has refused our request that it allow its members to have a voice on this proposal. Perhaps with your intervention, the talented members of SAG-AFTRA can decide for themselves if they wish to accept our offer.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,



Scott J. Witlin

cc: Gabriel Carteries