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2008
labor negotiations

From: Doug Kight

Sent: Thursday, Sept. 4, 2008 7:19 p.m.

Subject: Our next steps in this contract negotiation process

****This message is being sent by Doug Kight, vice president of Human Resources, to all managers and HR employees in Washington, Oregon and Kansas ****

Our next steps in this contract negotiation process

Since last night, I have heard from many of you that you are frustrated that we are back at the negotiating table after presenting our best and final offer. I can understand your frustration – negotiations are emotional for everyone involved. That's why I am writing you this message as we are waiting for our meetings with the federal mediator to begin.

At the urging of the Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service, we agreed last night to this 48-hour period to continue our discussions with a neutral third party.

With the help of the federal mediator, we will continue to listen to the union with an open mind, just as we have done for the past several months. We hope that with the mediator's help, the union can prioritize its issues. We could then make an objective assessment of those priorities and decide how to move toward a resolution.

We are bound to continue bargaining in good faith. We are not bound to reach an agreement in this 48-hour period, but a swift resolution is in everyone's best interest. If we do reach an agreement, the union would then have to schedule a vote.

Throughout this entire negotiations process you, as managers, have laid the groundwork for helping employees better understand our business and the issues that affect our success. You have done a great job talking with employees, answering their questions and helping them understand the value of this contract. We asked a lot of our management team and you stepped up to the task with tremendous energy.

These are difficult times in the factories, and we appreciate all that you are doing to help keep our business operating. Thank you for your continued leadership under challenging circumstances.

Doug