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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Will Appeal  
NLRB Regional Director's Finding it Violated Federal Law**

This morning, Michael A. Fuoco, president of the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh, and Jonathan D. Silver, Unit Chairman, were apprised by Richard Lowe, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's attorney from the union-busting Nashville, Tenn., law firm King & Ballow, that the PG will appeal the NLRB regional director's finding this week that found in favor of the Guild's Unfair Labor Practice [ULP] filing. The regional director found that the company violated federal law by unilaterally deciding not to pay an increase in health care. Companies involved in bargaining are required by federal law to maintain the same level of wages and benefits of expired contracts. The PG's refusal to pay the 5 percent increase will decrease health-care benefits for 150 Guild members and another 250 members of other PG unions as of April 1.

It should be noted that Lowe's advice to appeal the finding to an administrative law judge—he gleefully said he's willing to appeal all the way to the NLRB in Washington, D.C.--has no downside for him. In fact, it serves to continue to line his pockets and fleece Block Communications Inc., the PG's parent company based in Toledo, Ohio. Lowe is also negotiating with the Guild local at The (Toledo) Blade, another holding of BCI, owned by the Block family, which includes BCI chairman Allan Block and his twin John Robinson Block, publisher and editor-in-chief of the Post-Gazette and The Blade.

The decision is the latest by BCI that denies its workers economic justice. The Guild and other unions at the PG have been involved in contract negotiations with the paper for more than a year. The Guild's contract, and those of other unions at the paper, expired March 31, 2017.

Because of extensive wage cuts over the last dozen years, Guild members are earning 10 percent less than they did in 2006, the last time there was a raise. Also during that time, pensions have been frozen, benefits have been cut, health-care coverage has decreased. Yet the cost of everything -- including the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette itself -- has increased dramatically.

The Post-Gazette and The Blade, like most newspapers in the country, lose money but BCI itself regularly earns more than \$100 million in profits annually from its cable, TV and other holdings. Still, over the last year, in some of the most contentious contract talks at the paper in history, the company is demanding even more givebacks.

“BCI’s decision to appeal the regional director’s finding is not surprising given its decision to violate federal law in the first place,” Fuoco said. “This only serves to strengthen our resolve to battle BCI’s greed and its declaration of war on prize-winning, dedicated, talented journalists.”

Fuoco said BCI’s decision to appeal will have consequences but he declined to be specific. In late January, all Guild members withheld their bylines from their stories, photographs, columns and graphics for four days in protest of the ULP, the lack of progress in negotiations and the wage, benefit and staff cuts over the last 12 years.

“We have drawn a line in the sand in these contract negotiations. This paper cannot function without its reporters, photographers, graphic artists, web editors, page designers, copy editors and other Guild members.

“It’s time BCI realizes we are not backing down and there will be no concessionary contract this time. We will fight with everything we have against BCI whose actions devalue our talent and professionalism.

“We will prevail in this battle for economic justice. We are in the right. And right is might.”