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Bloomingdale's Workers Rally

NEW YORK — Bloomingdale's workers rallied outside the 59th Street flagship here to push for pay increases and other concessions from the retailer in contract negotiations.

"We are not asking for the moon and the stars, but only our fair share," said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Union, which represents the store's 2,000 workers.

Appelbaum, other union leaders and New York City Comptroller John Liu addressed a crowd of about 200 workers along Third Avenue.

Terry J. Lundgren's pay package was highlighted both from the podium and on signs handed out for the rally. The chairman, president and chief executive officer of Bloomingdale's parent Macy's Inc. saw his total compensation rise 18.4 percent to \$17.7 million last year. That included \$7.7 million in stock and

option awards, the full value of which the ceo might not ultimately realize.

"At the same time, Bloomingdale's employees are struggling to survive in New York," Appelbaum claimed. "Bloomingdale's should not discount their employees' jobs."

The current four-year contract expires May 1.

Workers are looking for a "substantial general wage increase" for each year of a four-year contract as well as a profit-sharing program and negotiations for commission rates.

Bloomingdale's is looking for a seven-year contract, according to a proposal that was supplied by the union.

A spokeswoman for the retailer said, "We are negotiating in good faith at the bargaining table and our goal is to have a contract agreement that is fair and equitable for both parties."

— EVAN CLARK