

Will Lehman, Mack Trucks worker, approved as eligible candidate for UAW International president

Our reporters
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For more information on the campaign of Will Lehman, visit WillforUAWPresident.org.

Will Lehman, a Mack Trucks worker in Pennsylvania, has been approved as an eligible candidate to run as president of the United Auto Workers. Lehman received the news that he was a “Bona Fide Candidate for International Office” Wednesday afternoon from the court-appointed monitor overseeing the elections.

The status of “Bona Fide Candidate” means that Lehman has met all the requirements to run for office. To get on the ballot, he must be nominated by delegates at the upcoming UAW Convention, which begins on July 25.

Responding to the news, Lehman told the *World Socialist Web Site*, “This is an important step in my campaign to place power in the hands of rank-and-file workers. I am running not to reform the bureaucratic apparatus that controls the UAW, but to abolish it through a powerful movement of rank-and-file workers.”

Lehman appealed to convention delegates to nominate him, and he called on workers to demand that his name be placed on the ballot. “Workers must have the right to choose from a broad array of candidates,” he said, “and have the opportunity to hear the socialist alternative to the pro-corporate policies of the UAW bureaucracy.”

In a statement announcing his campaign two weeks ago, Lehman called for an end to the dictatorship of the pro-corporate UAW apparatus; full rank-and-file control and oversight over all bargaining, vote-counting and safety; and a program to fight for what workers need, including massive wage increases, a cost-of-

living adjustment to meet soaring inflation, the abolition of all tiers, and full health care and pensions for workers and retirees.

Lehman called for the formation of rank-and-file committees at all UAW factories and workplaces and endorsed the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees.

“The recent inflation figures, which show a more than 9 percent increase in consumer prices last month,” Lehman said on Wednesday, “underscore the catastrophic conditions workers face as a result of concessions contracts imposed by the UAW. Workers need a new strategy to fight for what we need, not for what the corporations and UAW bureaucrats say is affordable.”

Lehman’s campaign for UAW president takes place under conditions of an upsurge of the class struggle in the US and internationally. Lehman, who has placed the international unity of the working class at the center of his campaign, met with Indian and German Ford workers on Sunday.

“For decades, UAW officials have told us that our enemies are not the corporations that have been attacking our jobs and conditions, but our fellow workers in other countries,” Lehman said in remarks to the meeting. “Workers are increasingly seeing that it is the companies and the union bureaucracies that are the enemy, and workers in other countries as our brothers and sisters, not our enemies.”

In the United States, a series of struggles have developed among auto and auto parts workers. Earlier this week, Lehman issued a statement appealing for all workers to support Ventra auto parts workers in Ewart, Michigan, who recently rejected a UAW-backed

contract by 95 percent.

“My candidacy is the product of the upsurge of auto and other workers,” Lehman said. “It is critical that it reach the broadest possible audience.”

Lehman called on workers throughout the UAW and beyond to promote his campaign. “Sign up for text updates at WillLehmanforUAW.org,” he said. “Anyone can donate to the campaign, not just UAW members, to ensure that I can reach as many workers as possible in the fight for a rank-and-file rebellion against the bureaucratic apparatus.

“Being declared a bona fide candidate is an important victory,” Lehman added. “Now we must fight to ensure that my name is on the ballot.”



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