

Video: Attorney for Will Lehman's statement on lawsuit against UAW and Monitor for violating members' right to vote in election

Our reporters

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On Thursday, rank-and-file UAW presidential candidate Will Lehman sued the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the court-appointed Monitor to extend the deadline to vote in the first-ever direct elections for UAW leadership and force action that will actually notify the membership that an election is taking place.

The lawsuit, *Lehman v. UAW*, was filed in federal court in Michigan. It defends the right of all rank-and-file members to cast a vote in an election that is a genuine and democratic expression of the will of the membership.

Lehman's attorney, Eric Lee, issued this statement in front of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

With the deadline today to mail ballots, turnout is only 91,000, roughly 9 percent of eligible UAW members.

Lee stated, "Ninety-one percent of UAW members haven't voted and the deadline to mail ballots is tomorrow [Friday, November 18]. This is the first direct election for UAW national officers, and members are unaware it is taking place. They are not able to easily request ballots.

"This means the rights of every single UAW member to participate in a meaningful election have been violated. The entrenched leadership of the UAW will try to blame low turnout on worker apathy, but the reality is the leadership doesn't want the membership to have a fair shot to vote it out of office."

In Lehman's motion for a temporary restraining order and/or preliminary injunction, Lehman asserts that the current UAW leadership—and the Monitor, by failing to take necessary action—have denied Lehman and other rank-and file UAW members the right to meaningfully

vote in a leadership election that genuinely expresses the will of the membership.

Unless action is swiftly taken to guarantee the right to vote, Lee explains, whatever leadership emerges from this election will not be legitimate, "duly-elected" or in any way representative of the rank-and-file members of the union like Lehman.

Lehman's lawsuit includes affidavits and statements from many workers who did not receive a ballot even after requesting one from the Monitor.



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