

# Clarios workers are taking a stand for all autoworkers. We must stand with them! No handling of scab batteries!

Statement of the Steering Committee of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committees  
30 May 2023

*The following statement was adopted by the Steering Committee of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committees to defend the striking Clarios auto battery workers in Holland, Ohio. For more information on setting up Clarios Strike Solidarity Committees, fill out the form at the end of this statement.*

The Steering Committee of the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committees calls on all UAW members to support the courageous struggle by 525 Clarios workers in the Toledo suburb of Holland, Ohio.

For more than three weeks, Clarios workers have stood up against the largest auto battery manufacturer in the world, which has tried to break their strike by cutting off medical benefits, obtaining a court injunction to limit picketing and hiring scab workers to replace the strikers. The Clarios workers have stood strong but they can't fight this battle alone!

We call on autoworkers in the UAW to form Clarios Strike Solidarity Committees to hold discussions and raise the demand for a ban on the handling of scab batteries from Clarios. Before the strike, the Holland plant produced 125,000 to 150,000 batteries per week for Ford and General Motors alone.

Many workers may not know it but batteries from the Holland, Ohio and other Clarios plants are manufactured under the brand names of Motorcraft (Ford), AC Delco (GM) and Mopar (Stellantis) and we put them into top-selling models including the Ford F-Series, GM Silverado/Sierra, Dodge Ram trucks and many other models.

We should be repulsed by handling batteries produced by scab replacement workers at the Holland, Ohio plant or anywhere else the company is sending production. We cannot allow a situation where we are

used to help Clarios and break the strike! If that happens it will only come back to haunt us when our own contracts expire in less than four months.

Last week, Clarios workers voted by 76 percent to reject a second contract recommended by UAW International and Local 12 officials. Like the first contract, it included cuts in real wages and a new schedule that would force workers to work 12-hour shifts without overtime payments after eight hours.

In voting down the deal, Clarios workers recognized that they are fighting not just for themselves but every autoworker. "If we bend, that will open the gates for GM, Ford and Stellantis," one striking worker said. "We're not going to let that happen." Another worker added, "Our fight is their fight, their fight is ours."

If Clarios can impose 12-hour shifts at straight time, along with another massive cut in real wages, GM, Ford and Stellantis will make similar demands.

The Big Three and Wall Street investors certainly see the Clarios strike as strategic. GM and Stellantis have long partnered with the battery maker, and sitting on the Clarios board are former top managers from GM and other auto corporations. The auto execs want to crush the Clarios strike and impose a humiliating defeat on the workers to strengthen their hands against the 170,000 Big Three autoworkers in the US and Canada whose contracts expire in mid-September.

In other words, the Clarios fight is the first battle in a bigger war against the demands of the global auto corporations that workers pay for the transition to electric vehicles through the destruction of our jobs, wages and working conditions.

We cannot rely on the UAW apparatus. While newly-elected UAW President Shawn Fain claimed that he

was going to end the corruption and pro-corporate policies of his predecessor, he has responded to the Clarios strike just as Curry would. This includes trying to ram through contracts that workers don't want in shotgun votes based on self-serving "highlights."

Fain and the rest of the UAW bureaucracy are allowing the auto plants to continue production with scab batteries, which only strengthens Clarios and weakens our brothers and sisters. They are doing nothing to mobilize broader support, or even inform workers that the strike is staking place. Fain himself has not even bothered to visit the Clarios workers picket line.

There is a long tradition in the labor movement of workers refusing to handle products made by scabs. During the great Pullman strike of 1892, members of the American Railway Union refused to hitch sleeping cars manufactured by strikebreakers at the Pullman Company in Chicago. In the militant strikes in the 1970s and 1980s, both US and British miners joined with transport workers to block the movement of scab produced coal. In 1989 tens of thousands of US miners walked out in support of striking Pittston miners who had been replaced by scab labor.

Even as late as 1997, long after the union apparatus had become an instrument of corporate management, the UAW was forced due to enormous sentiment among workers to threaten Ford assembly plants with pickets during a strike at Johnson Control, Clarios' predecessor. Ford then refused to accept scab made parts.

In a statement published last week, the newly-formed Clarios Workers Rank-and-File Committee declared, "Workers have enormous power. At the beginning of the strike many of us didn't realize how essential we were to the entire auto industry. But there are already reports that Ford is running out of batteries and will have to cut back on production. At the same time, we are getting reports from Toledo Jeep, Warren Truck and the GM Flint Assembly Plant that workers do not want to handle scab batteries on their assembly lines."

The committee is right. Workers have enormous power! But to realize this power we must organize ourselves.

The Steering Committee of Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committees has been established to organize the development of rank-and-file committees, comprised

of, by and for the workers, in every plant.

We call on workers to form Clarios Strike Solidarity committees today to mobilize support among Big Three and auto workers. A particular appeal must be made for support to Clarios' 5,800 workers at the company's 18 plants around the US and the more than 10,000 other Clarios workers in Mexico, Brazil, Europe and Asia.

Contact us for assistance in establishing a committee! Spread the word, and let all your friends and coworkers know the facts and the issues that are at stake.

*Text AUTO to (866) 847-1086 to sign up for text updates from the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Network or to discuss forming a rank-and-file strike support committee. You can also fill out the form below.*



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**