

# “I’m a strong no vote”: Widespread opposition to UAW sellout at Allison Transmission

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15 January 2024

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The United Auto Workers is forcing 1,500 Allison Transmission in Indianapolis, Indiana workers to vote Tuesday on another a four-year sellout agreement, a month after workers voted down the first UAW-backed agreement by 96.2 percent. On Friday, UAW Local 933 officials held so-called explanation meetings to sell the deal, which like the Big Three and Mack Trucks contract is being called “historic.” In fact, wages under the new deal would be far below, in real terms, what workers were making when the Carlyle Group private equity firm acquired Allison from General Motors in 2007.

Although union officials claim the deal will “end tiers,” lower-paid workers will only receive top pay after a four-year “progression” to top pay and even this is not guaranteed. In a footnote, the contract says progression length is “pending finalization of merged wage schedule.” Several classifications, including oilers and material services hired before 2008, will only be receiving lump sum payments “in lieu of wage increases.”

Starting pay would be set at \$20-22 an hour, well below the \$30.06 an hour the Living Wage Calculator says a worker in a household with two working adults and a single child needs to keep up with living expenses in the Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson Metropolitan Area.

Similar to the previous TA that workers rejected, the UAW kept the Alternative Work Schedules, a further attempt to destroy whatever is left of the eight-hour day. In addition, the Memorandum of Understanding on

Plant 14 gives Allison unlimited access to the workforce to maintain the supply of tank transmissions for the US military as it presses for World War.

Lastly, the UAW is attempting to exploit the economic desperation of lower-paid tier workers by including a \$7,000 signing bonus. But this includes a \$1,000 Christmas bonus previously withheld by Allison, and will be subjected to taxes and payroll deductions, including UAW dues payments.

## “I’m a very strong no vote.”

“I’m a very strong no vote,” a senior worker at Allison told the *WSWS Autoworker Newsletter*. “Everybody’s afraid that if they vote ‘no’ and we were to go out on strike, that the company will actually backtrack and offer less than what they have before. I’ve tried to tell them that this place has made more money than in the history of Allison and there’s no way the stockholders would stand for them to lose millions of dollars every day, [and] that they would have no choice but the cave in.

“UAW officials told us before that they were going to take the alternative work schedule out and they did not. I’ve heard nothing but horror stories from Ford, Chrysler and GM workers about their alternative work schedule and ours will be even more lenient for the company.

“People around here have no clue how bad they’re getting ready to get it stuck to them. And to tell the truth, I think the union boys have a lot more on the

table than what you would even suggest. We don't know if they have stock options or whatever other perks that they may have that they're afraid of giving up. What's really sad, is our union stewards are paid BY THE COMPANY and NOT by the union, which leads me to believe there's a lot of 'under the table' going on."

Aware of the massive opposition by rank-and-file Allison workers, the UAW publicity department created a promotional video, which this worker called a "Pathetic push to get a yes vote."

"It's scary. I think the union boys have a lot of people believing that this is a great contract, and they need to vote yes. I'm afraid they are as corrupt as our government. I think that's what's being pushed and a lot of low seniority people especially the new hires are the one wanting to vote yes because all they can see is the dollar signs in the beginning. They're not looking down the road.

"I didn't bother going [to the informational meeting] because I've been lied to by the company and the union before and I don't think today would be any different. I did hear people say they were trying to explain why the AWS isn't all that bad. If you didn't want it people would vote on it, and it had to pass by 66% or better before they can implement it. I call BS. The union said that they were going to have it taken out all together after the first turn down by vote, but, by golly, here it is again. I would imagine the company probably threatened to take some of their perks away."

Another worker added, "I'm hearing that the contract will be voted down too. Mainly because of the restructuring of the 40-hour work week. That is one of the main sticking points. I was passing out information on just this sticking point and people did not know about it. They did not read the contract until today. I hope most people will vote no. We need to take that out of the contract. With a lot of people passing out information before they gave the contract out, they are thinking twice before they vote now. Seems like the bargaining committee is already celebrating like we have already voted yes."

Since the expiration of the contract in mid-November, UAW President Shawn Fain, District 2B Director David Green and UAW Local 933 officials have done everything to block a strike at Allison despite the near unanimous strike vote by rank-and-file workers.

Despite Shawn Fain's claims that the UAW opposes the US-backed genocide in Gaza, the union president has worked with the Biden administration to ensure that there is no disruption to US and Israeli war machines. In December 2022, the Israeli Ministry of Defense uses Allison 4800 Specialty Series transmissions for their 8-wheeled Eitan Armored Fighting Vehicle (AFV).

On Tuesday, Fain is holding a livestream to promote the UAW organizing campaign in the South and the "big wins at Allison Transmission." The UAW president's lies about the "historic" contracts at GM, Ford and Stellantis have already been exposed with the thousands of jobs cuts at the Big Three automakers, including last week's termination of hundreds of Stellantis supplemental workers who the UAW promised would be converted to full-time positions.

Allison workers should vote down the sellout contract again. But as the WSWS explained, as long as the contract process is left in the hands of the UAW bureaucracy, they will continue to bring back one pro-company contract after another, as demonstrated at Mack Trucks, Clarios, Lear, and other companies last year. Allison Transmission workers must take control out of the hands of the UAW bureaucracy and broaden this struggle to their coworkers at GM Marion, Stellantis Kokomo, GM Fort Wayne and others.

This includes demanding the dismissal of the bargaining committee and Region 2B Director David Green and their replacement with a committee of trusted militants, elected by the rank and file. At the same time, rank-and-file Allison workers must prepare an all-out strike to win their demands for inflation-busting wage increases, the restoration of all UAW-backed concessions, and a real end to all tiers.



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