

# Will Lehman calls on workers to attend January 20 emergency meeting to fight mass layoffs in the auto industry

Our reporter  
18 January 2024

Will Lehman, a Pennsylvania Mack Trucks worker who ran a rank-and-file and socialist campaign for UAW president in 2022, is appealing to workers to attend this Saturday's emergency online meeting to discuss how to stop the mass layoffs in the auto industry. The Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network, which is part of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC), is co-sponsoring the meeting with the *World Socialist Web Site* to organize the fight to defend jobs. It will be held at 1:00 p.m. Eastern / 12:00 p.m. Central. Register [here](#).

On January 12, Stellantis permanently fired 539 supplemental (temporary) employees (SEs) in Metro Detroit and Indiana without any prior notice. "These cuts are just the beginning," Lehman says in the video, noting that the UAW admits the company will terminate up to 1,600 more SEs in the coming months, if not sooner. The firings are on top of thousands of previously announced layoffs at assembly plants in Detroit and Toledo, along with similar job cuts being implemented at GM and Ford.

"This assault on workers' jobs totally exposes the real character of the supposedly 'historic' Big Three contracts," Lehman says, noting that UAW President Shawn Fain and the rest of the UAW bureaucracy deliberately concealed these job cuts from workers to "ram through their pro-company contracts."

Autoworkers in Italy, Germany and throughout the world are facing attacks on their jobs, along with workers in every industry. He pointed to the statement by the IWA-RFC posted by the *World Socialist Web Site* earlier this week, which urges workers to form rank-and-file committees to coordinate common action and

prepare strike activity to stop the layoffs. The IWA-RFC is demanding an immediate end to all job cuts, the reinstatement of all those affected, the reduction of the workday and an increase in pay to account for the fewer hours needed to produce EVs and decades of stagnant wages and the unification of workers across borders to fight the global jobs massacre. The global auto industry, the IWA-RFC demands, must be put under social ownership and democratic workers' control.

"The UAW knew what the company was going to do, but they never told us so they could get our votes to get this contract through and then turn around and give us the shaft," a supplemental worker at the Toledo Assembly Complex who plans to attend Saturday's meeting told the WSWs. "Shawn Fain goes on national TV and tells everybody we won a fair contract, and everyone is safe and now people are being fired and laid off.

"We have a child, and we need our jobs, we need our income. As a kid growing up in Toledo, Ohio, and passing that plant every day, it was our dream to get a job there because once you were in, you were set for life. They just took away all our hopes and dreams and put us on the chopping block. We need to fight this. I'll absolutely come to the meeting on Saturday."

Lehman concludes his statement by urging workers to share his video, attend this Saturday's emergency meeting and take up the fight to defend workers' jobs and livelihoods. Register [here](#) to attend the meeting.



To contact the WSWs and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

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

--