

Demand a new UAW election! Defend jobs against the UAW-management conspiracy through rank and file power! Expand the Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee!

Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee

17 July 2024

The Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee endorses the demand by the International Workers Alliance of Rank and File Committees (IWA-RFC) for new UAW elections overseen by the rank-and-file.

Our brother and member of the IWA-RFC, Will Lehman, successfully won the lawsuit against Biden's Department of Labor. The ruling of David Lawson, the federal district court judge for the Eastern District of Michigan, exposed the UAW bureaucracy, the federal monitor and the Biden administration in suppressing the democratic rights of one million of our rank-and-file autoworkers, academic workers and retirees.

In November 2022, Lehman's appeal for an extension of the election deadline to make sure every one of us was able to vote was denied by the same judge. The UAW bureaucracy also refused to update mailing addresses and even inform many of us an election was taking place. The result was that only 9 percent of the membership was able to vote. This rigged process is what brought current president Shawn Fain to power.

An Indiana Transmission Plant worker said, "I was told with the election I could not vote since I was a [temporary part-time worker]. I wanted to vote in it. They wouldn't allow me to vote in the national election but they needed my vote for the contract. No one gave me an answer on this, and that's why I voted it down. They dangled \$5,000 in front of everyone and lied to our face on everything."

The latest revelations prove that Will Lehman and the IWA-RFC were right: that this was an illegitimate election.

The ruling shows the contempt the UAW bureaucracy and the entire political establishment have towards the working class. Fain is a stooge of the Democratic Party and management. Recently, Biden went to AFL-CIO headquarters and told a room full of bureaucrats, including Fain, "I look at you as my domestic NATO." But if he sees the bureaucracy as a wartime alliance, then it is a war against us workers.

As Will Lehman explained to our rank-and-file committee:

Fain is being drawn in closer with Biden administration, just as was planned from the beginning. The Democrats are aligning themselves closer with the bureaucracy to carry out war, but war is immensely unpopular among rank-and-file workers. We're the ones who are made to pay for it, through the exploitation of our labor and with our lives.

A full-time KEP worker told us, "I wish the workers on the floor realized the power they would have if they just stood together. People on the floor should realize the UAW is not sharing all this information. I think it shows a new level of dishonesty and corruption."

A federal investigation is being conducted by the federal monitor against Fain, Secretary Treasurer Mock and an unnamed regional director, for misuse of union resources and obstructing the disclosure of documents. They are still blocking documents that would reveal

massive levels of corruption under Fain's so-called "reform" administration. If they are innocent, what are they hiding?

Fain's base of power has long been here Kokomo, Indiana. He's a long-time bureaucrat that has proved his worth to the ruling class, including when he helped ram through the 2009 sellout with the Obama/Biden White House.

Since they rammed through the current contract, thousands of workers Michigan, Ohio and Indiana have lost their jobs. Our brothers and sisters at Warren Truck are losing a second shift, and John Deere is cutting 800 jobs in Iowa and Illinois. Kokomo is being planned for shutdown by 2025.

At KEP, temporary part-time workers that have been flipped to full-time status are now going to be let go by Stellantis. Those people that will be laid off will be loaned out to the battery plant in Kokomo, a joint venture with Stellantis and Samsung, all sanctioned by the UAW.

In every state where layoffs are taking place, EV grants are being given by the federal government. Stellantis said last year \$155 million will be invested in EV production.

This is only a down payment. CEO Carlos Tavares told investors that "the EV race has become a cost-cutting race." What he means is more jobs losses while he hires EV parts workers and engineers at poverty wages.

The UAW knew about all of this! Fain told us during the contract negotiations he was transparent! Now he, Boyer and Mock all point fingers at each other, but they are all guilty.

They secretly made sure that hire-in dates were changed so most workers had seven months seniority, so they could fire us. Meanwhile they say nothing about the death traps we work in, the injuries and unexplained deaths of our brothers like Daulton Simmers or Tywaun Long. They treat us with total contempt.

Now the union sends people to campaign at Subaru to unionize. But the bureaucracy will just take their dues money and give nothing in return.

The UAW bureaucrats try to deflect blame onto Mexican and Chinese workers to divide us from our class brothers and sisters. Fain is in lockstep with the wars abroad, calling on autoworkers to build an

'arsenal of democracy.'

To fight for real workers' democracy, it has to come from the shop floor, the rank and file. The whole thing from the election to our contracts needs to be overseen by the rank and file. Otherwise we replace one corporate bureaucrat with another. In our last statement we said, "With our brothers and sisters of the IWA-RFC, we are for abolishing, not reforming, the UAW bureaucracy, to put power back into the hands of the workers."

To coordinate this fight, we propose to our co-workers that they take up the following demands:

? The full report by the monitor relating to the corruption investigation made public to the rank and file. We have a right to know where our dues money is going and the misuse by the UAW leadership!

? All side deals with Stellantis, Big Three, Clarios, Allison Transmission, General Dynamics must be made public to the rank and file. Like the lawsuit ruling, the UAW bureaucracy worked closely with the companies and the government. They suppressed for decades contact details and strikes in fear of us workers fighting for our class interests.

? All information the UAW has on the plant closures and job cuts should be made public. They don't want to tell us anything. The latest announcements of job cuts are done behind our backs. Like Fain's decision to promote Biden and the 'arsenal of democracy,' it was done without any discussion or vote by the rank and file.

? A new UAW election, overseen by the rank-and-file, not the bureaucrats or the government! Fain's presidency is illegitimate. Our contracts from Clarios to the Big Three to Allison Transmission should be voided and the election rerun. All workers, whether they are TPTs, SEs, full-time, disabled, retired, and laid off, everyone gets a ballot! The thousands that were laid off should get a vote, it was the bureaucracy that decided their fates with the company, not the workers.

If you agree with this, then join us. Fill out the form below for more information.



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