

# Dakkota auto parts workers furious over snap vote on deal to end strike: “Why would they even bring this back to us?”

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*Work at Dakkota, Ford or in the auto industry? Fill out the form below to get involved with the Autoworkers Rank-and-File Committee Network at your plant.*

*The International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) is holding a meeting this Sunday, August 25, at 3:00 p.m. US Eastern Time, “For global action to defend jobs at Warren Truck and around the world!” To register, click here.*

Striking Dakkota parts workers are furious that the United Auto Workers has brought back a sellout deal nearly identical to one they had previously rejected three weeks ago.

On Monday evening, the UAW hastily called for a snap vote on the contract for Tuesday and Wednesday in a bid to end the three-week strike.

Workers who attended the UAW 3212 union meeting held Tuesday at the union hall denounced the agreement the UAW brought back.

“They came back with the same contract,” a veteran worker told the *World Socialist Web Site*. “They worded it slightly differently, but it was the exact same deal. And they never gave us any strike pay this whole time.”

The worker added, “Why would they even bring this [contract] to us? We voted ‘No’! That was a smack in the face! It was letting us know how corrupt they are.”

The latest sellout agreement is almost identical to the previous agreement offering poverty wages that had been rejected by 87 percent before workers went on strike. The only change is a slight increase in the signing bonus from \$1,700 to \$2,500.

The agreement offered the exact same wage structure, with wages starting at \$16.80 for new hires and ending at \$18 by 2028. Senior workers would make \$21 to start and end with \$25 by the end of the contract.

Last Friday, rank-and-file workers at Ford and Dakkota issued a joint statement, “Support the Dakkota workers strike! Ban scab parts and launch a rank-and-file counteroffensive!” The statement warned that the UAW was ignoring the will of the membership. It also called for workers at Ford and Dakkota to develop rank-and-file committees to prevent the UAW from

defeating the strike.

These warnings have been proven correct. Dakkota workers must urgently take the initiative with the development of a rank-and-file strategy.

In addition to voting “No” on a contract that only offers poverty wages, workers must appeal to Ford workers to support them and link up with workers at Stellantis Warren Truck and across the auto industry to mount a rank-and-file counteroffensive to fight for their demands, including a 50 percent wage increase and much more.

**“We voted ‘No’! That was a smack in the face!”**

From the start, the UAW bureaucracy and union president Shawn Fain have sought to isolate the Dakkota strike and prevent workers from linking up with autoworkers in other plants, thus creating the conditions to mount a counteroffensive against the attacks on jobs, wages and working conditions.

The obvious purpose of the snap vote is to try and isolate workers at Dakkota from workers at Stellantis in particular. Nearly 2,500 workers have been threatened with permanent mass layoffs at Stellantis’s Warren Truck plant. Seeking to preempt a rank-and-file rebellion of autoworkers, the UAW issued an empty strike threat over the Stellantis layoffs on Monday, only hours before announcing the vote at Dakkota.

On Monday evening, Shawn Fain stumped for the pro-corporate Biden White House and the Kamala Harris campaign at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He did not mention the Dakkota strike.

Fain and the UAW have promised to give the Democratic National Committee over \$1.5 million, while they are starving Dakkota workers on the picket line.

The UAW has also forced workers at the nearby Ford Chicago Assembly plant to handle scab parts from Dakkota, claiming there is nothing that can be done.

## **“The rank and file have to take care of each other”**

On Tuesday afternoon, a WSWs reporting team was very warmly received by Dakkota workers at the union hall and at the picket lines.

Workers discussed with reporters their opposition to the contract and closely reviewed the joint statement by the rank-and-file workers at Ford and Dakkota.

When one worker heard a WSWs reporter speak, they escorted the reporters to each picket, saying “you have to hear this.” As the WSWs reporters left, more than a dozen workers were sitting and studying the joint statement carefully.

A veteran worker spoke on the impact of the statement, “It’s having a powerful effect on people here. It’s giving people hope. The rank and file have to take care of each other. [UAW] 3212 hasn’t done anything for us. We’re recognizing that and we’re coming together.”

“Thank you for bringing this,” a worker on the picket line said. “I agree with this. This shows that there are people who are coming behind us, and will support us. And we want these others strikes to unify.”

Another Dakkota worker spoke on unifying with the over 1,000 Cornell UAW academic workers on strike and the attacks on Stellantis workers: “If we unify, they can’t fight that many battles, here in this state, there in that state and all over the place. They can’t fight us from all directions, and you’re telling us why they want to shut this down.”

“We would have the ability to shut it down on our terms rather than theirs,” the worker added.

## **“I voted ‘No’....I want to fight for us!”**

Another veteran worker spoke out ahead of going to the union hall. She said, “Most definitely it’s going to be the same contract but just trying to change the bonuses to try to change the young people’s mind to be able to take the contract.

“I know we’re all going to be voting ‘no’. Hopefully no one got brainwashed. But believe me, I know the cost of living and everything. Everybody’s upset because we have not gotten one check from the union for strike pay.”

She also denounced Fain’s empty words at the Democratic National Convention, “I know I heard about it. It’s sad that they didn’t mention us. Of course not. We’ll mess up their reputation! I’m telling you, they’re all crooks—all politics.”

“I voted ‘No’ today. I am out here, I want to fight for us,” yet another worker stated on the pickets.

## **“Show me the full contract!”**

A newer Dakkota worker described the union meeting this afternoon as a “farce.” He said UAW officials responded with condescension to workers’ questions.

He said, “Let me paint the setting for you. There’s these tables. They are passing the contract highlights out and then telling us to go vote on it. I asked her on the table, can I see the underlying part of the contract? There’s more to the contract. I would like to see the whole contract!”

The chairperson told him, “You don’t have to see the whole contract.” He then responded, “We told her, ‘You know, hey, we are the workers and we have lost a lot of confidence in you.’ She didn’t like that comment. She’s acting like nobody can tell her nothing. She’s not giving everyone the correct answers they need. She’s brushing everyone off. She’s telling everyone this is a good contract. People are up there frustrated and angry. We’re voting ‘No.’ Me and everybody were telling everyone to vote ‘No’ on this.”

The worker added, “You’re telling us to go vote after just seeing only highlights. I want to see the full contract. Show me the whole contract! I want to know about vacation, PTO, and what has changed.” In response to him, the UAW chairwoman said, “I can’t give you that,” further infuriating the Dakkota workers.

He then demanded of her, “Where’s our strike check? Come Friday, we’ll be behind two checks. When are we going to get the other checks?” To which the UAW chairwoman and the president dismissed them with further excuses that they were busy negotiating the sellout agreement.

“It was a travesty,” the worker said of the whole process.

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