Widespread enthusiasm for Will Lehman's campaign for UAW president

Our reporters
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The announcement by Mack Trucks worker Will Lehman that he is running for president of the United Auto Workers has been met with widespread enthusiasm from workers across industries and countries. Workers are outraged by the betrayals of the UAW bureaucracy and the escalating attack on jobs and the social and democratic rights of the working class.

On Friday, Lehman released a video announcement on his campaign website, WillforUAWPresident.org, outlining his fight to mobilize the rank and file to abolish the corrupt UAW bureaucracy and put power in the hands of workers on the shop floor. As of this writing, the video has been viewed more than 320,000 times on X, with 3,900 likes and 739 reposts. It has also been widely viewed on YouTube, TikTok and other social media platforms.

Comments posted below the videos welcomed the campaign, with autoworkers and others expressing their solidarity with the statement by the rank-and-file worker from Macungie, Pennsylvania.

One member of the Michigan Nurses Association replied to Will's X post

> Start a GoFundMe!!!! I'd like to donate!!! We should all support this. I was an MNA member and the bureaucrats held Fain up like he was a hero for his "Stand up Strike." Just another excuse not to pay strike pay and block strikes.

Other comments included:

• "Solidarity. UAW is infected with false consciousness. Also, this was a fantastic and effective presentation method."

• "Agreed. Down with the rotten 'social peace'! Not just in the USA but everywhere."

• "This is what real union leadership looks like"

• "ALL POWER TO THE RANK AND FILE"

• "My mother is a delegate for her local. I just sent this to her. Unions have too long been castrated and assimilated into capital. I truly hope that revolutionary potential can be brought back to them."

• "Not in the UAW, but I love your platform. Thank you for trying to bring back revolutionary unionism to America and fighting against the current bureaucratic and rotten union system in America."

• "Sounds good. Solidarity from the UK where we are also fighting hard to clear out the boss-friendly bureaucracy that is suffocating our trade unions."

Replying to the TikTok post, a young worker asked:

> Can you do something about the abuse of power, black balling, and "boys clubs" culture by elected officials on the local level? They're tainting the reputation & integrity of the UAW from the inside out. You should see the plant work group pages.

Workers at the Detroit Three auto plants who contacted the campaign also expressed their support.

A Ford Rouge worker said: "Shawn Fain brought us a bogus contract. He supports whoever is president. He supported Biden, and now he supports Trump.

"The same things happen every day and in the plant. Everybody knows if you have a problem and you complain, the union does nothing. I supported TJ Sabula calling Trump a pedophile protector when the president toured our plant. If you're rich, they can do whatever they want."

"When TJ was suspended, the union didn't do a damn thing," he said of the outspoken worker who was only returned to his job because of the popular outpouring of support from working people across the US and the world.

"Will Lehman will get my vote. The last election they did everything they could to suppress the vote. Just like the contract, they want you to vote for something that you don't even know what's in it. The union wants to control you. It'll be good for the people within the shop to have an

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opportunity to make the decisions. The union and the company are in each other's pockets. They both want to keep the line rolling whether somebody dies or not, no matter what. We make jokes about it, but it's not a joke."

A veteran Ford worker from Ohio who contacted the campaign praised the campaign announcement: "Phenomenal message to the heart and soul of the problem. Could not have been more timely. Will Lehman on his platform has said what everybody is thinking. The UAW International is going to be hard pressed to defend this anymore. Undependable. The more the International tries to defend the companies the more ground they're going to lose especially with the employees that are not legacy.

"The International has no credibility. Every worker is a 10 to 1 ratio against the International. The key to this is Will's platform and social equality. This country is ready for a social revolution from being screwed over."

Supporters of Lehman's campaign also distributed his campaign statement at the Stellantis Warren Truck plant in suburban Detroit and the General Motors Delta Township Assembly Plant near Lansing, Michigan. There is widespread disgust at the plants over Fain's betrayal of the 2023 contract battle and the ongoing attack on jobs and conditions.

"The UAW is nothing like it used to be decades ago," a veteran Warren Truck worker said. "They don't stick up for workers. It seems like they just bow down and take what they can get. There is too much bureaucratic BS right now. Everybody is making money off the backs of workers," he said, expressing his support for Lehman's campaign.

Another Warren Truck worker, who voted for Lehman in 2022, said he supported the fight for rank-and-file committees. "That's what Will pushed the last time too. It's going to be a hell of a fight. I hope that Will doesn't get screwed over like he did by the apparatus. I hope he gets more support and that more people will see what he was saying last time was true and will continue to be true.

"The current apparatus doesn't want any actual change because they are enjoying the benefits they get. Even though Fain ran like he was the second coming of Walter Reuther, that was definitely not the case. It was all bark and no bite."

Referring to the false promises Fain and other UAW officials made to part-time temporary employees to push through the pro-company contract in 2023, he said, "I assumed the contract was going to screw them over. They rolled them over and immediately laid them off. Just like the change to the attendance program was worse for us. We got a higher wage, and they sold out our quality of life. They didn't care. That's not what we wanted."

Pointing to the April 7, 2025, death of Stellantis worker Ronald Adams Sr. at the Dundee Engine plant, he said, "He was crushed because management rushed to reopen the plant and someone may have cut through the lockout." He said he was not surprised that the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration has not released the results of its investigation more than 10 months after Adams' death.

"With the current Trump administration, I don't expect anything to come from any federal agency that will help us. It's the same with Governor Gretchen Whitmer, she is beholden to the insurance companies and the auto companies."

The worker pointed to Trump's moves to establish a dictatorship and the growing wave of protests in Minneapolis and around the country. "You go after opposition, you bust unions and anything that would help us fight back. People are waking up because the killings [of Renée Nicole Good and Alex Pretti] in Minneapolis. As much as protesting is good, we don't protest in a way that really disrupts things. We go out a day, wave our flag and say our things, but then we go back to our life.

"We need a general strike. A sustained movement, and it is going to make us suffer to get through it, but we will make them suffer more. If we can disrupt money, because that is the only thing that anyone at the top cares about, and that's the only power that we have."

At the GM Delta Township a veteran worker said, "I'll definitely check Will out. I've been over here for a decade and have never met a good UAW [official]. Fain screwed us. I'd like to get him out of there."

Responding to eroding safety conditions in the factory, he said, "We almost had a death a week or two ago. There was a fire, and they forced us to walk all the way over to general assembly and walk back. Someone collapsed and was rushed out in an ambulance. The nurse was in such a hurry that she fell and broke her leg on the ice. The guy almost dying and the girl breaking her leg was never reported."

A younger worker responding to Lehman's call to put workers on the shop floor in charge of the UAW, declared, "Awesome! Oh yeah, I saw him on the ballot last time but I didn't know who he was. I'll definitely look him over and consider this."

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