

Nexteer auto parts workers in Saginaw force UAW to schedule strike vote after rejecting two sellout contracts

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Are you a Nexteer worker? Fill out the form at the end of the article for information on joining the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee.

At an explosive meeting of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 699 members held Sunday, rank-and-file workers at the Nexteer parts plant in Saginaw, Michigan, chased UAW International Representative Jason Tuck from the meeting room and forced the union local to schedule a strike vote for Wednesday, May 20.

The meeting came two days after Local 699 members voted down by more than 73 percent the second sellout tentative agreement brought by the union bureaucracy. On March 31, Nexteer workers rejected the first TA by more than 96 percent.

Nexteer, which employs 1,300 workers, produces critical parts such as steering panels and components for some of the Big Three automakers' best-selling models. Under conditions of "just-in-time" delivery of parts to assembly plants, a Nexteer strike could quickly shut down production at General Motors, Ford and Stellantis. It could ignite a wave of strikes at US auto parts companies. Last Monday, workers at American Axle's Three Rivers, Michigan, plant voted by 98 percent to authorize a strike. Workers at Dana, Bridgewater Interiors and Magna have contract expirations over the next several weeks.

This is precisely what the UAW bureaucrats, at both the national and the local level, are desperate to prevent. Their six-figure salaries and expense accounts depend on suppressing the class struggle and imposing ever more onerous conditions on the workers, who are forced to pay them tribute in the form of dues deducted from the workers' paychecks.

There were some 200 workers at Sunday's union meeting and the mood was angry. More workers would have likely attended to demand strike action, but many were forced to work Sunday due to mandatory overtime.

After the massive "no" vote on the first TA, the union officials indefinitely extended the old contract behind the backs of the workers and told them a strike would be "illegal." Following Friday's rejection of the second TA, Local 699 officials said nothing of a strike, advising only that Sunday's meeting would discuss "the next steps."

One worker wrote in a Facebook post that at Sunday's meeting, International Rep Jason Tuck "tried to sell us a bill of goods for his own good." The worker continued, "Well, he's making a good salary and on top of the [F] bombs he dropped, he walked out like a coward with his tail stuck between his legs."

Another worker told the WSWS, "It's true [Tuck] is a piece of crap and was cussing them. He left the meeting mid-way through."

On the eve of the meeting, the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee issued a statement urging workers to attend and vote for immediate strike action. The statement read in part:

After we voted down the latest pro-company deal, UAW Local 699 officials called a membership meeting for Sunday to discuss "next steps." There is only one next step: a membership vote to walk out on strike on Monday. We are not asking the UAW officials for their blessing. We are ordering them to abide by the will of the membership.

If they refuse to hold a strike vote, they should step aside. We will organize our own vote and elect a committee to organize a strike, outline our demands, and reach out to other auto and auto parts workers for support to win our demands.

On Saturday, a WSWS reporting team visited the Saginaw plant. A veteran worker with 20 years said:

They've brought in the UAW International Rep Jason Tuck to sell us out. He keeps threatening that they will shut down the plant if we don't take this contract. Management keeps saying they will go to Mexico or Poland. Meanwhile, they're bragging about making \$49 million in profits. Go ahead shut it down because we can't live with this anymore.

Another Nexteer worker, a fourth-generation worker at the Saginaw plant, said:

After GM spun off the plant, a lot of the guys in the inner union circle got transfers to the GM plants and never lost their wages and pensions. But the union kept telling us, “Stick it out,” and workers like my dad lost everything.

In ‘06 they signed a rotten contract after the 20-hour strike around Christmas. We didn’t have any raises for five years. The union said that this was just a “bump in the road,” and we’d get it back when the company did better. But we’ve been losing ever since.

Then you got union reps like Troy Newberry. We voted him out and he gets a union position heading health and safety in the plant. After that he moves over to health and safety for management. For them, being a union rep is a career move.

In fact, according to the UAW, in 2025 Jason Tuck made \$148,476. On a 40 hour/week basis, this computes to \$71.38 an hour. Since GM, with the support of the UAW bureaucracy, spun off its Delphi parts division in 1999 and Nexteer Automotive was founded 16 years ago, the wages and benefits of workers at the Saginaw plant have been gutted. Under the second TA pushed by the union bureaucrats, newly hired workers would receive \$19.50 an hour. Tuck’s pay is nearly 400 percent this fast food-level wage.

Steven Dawes, UAW Region 1D director, brought home \$229,813 in 2025. He oversees the Saginaw district, and as UAW Local 651 officer in 1998, backed the sellout of the 54-day strike by 9,200 GM workers at the Metal Fabrication Center and Delphi East plants, which was followed by the spinoff of Delphi.

Under the second TA voted down on Friday, the full rate for production workers after four years would be \$27 an hour, the same wage workers made when the company was called Delphi. If the workers’ wages had kept up with inflation, they would be over \$45 today.

The workers lost their cost-of-living escalator, saw their health costs soar and were divided by a multi-tier system that condemns hundreds of new-hires to not just poverty, but destitution wages.

The second TA was in some respects worse than the first. It contained an expanded “grow in” period for new hires, who would have to work 48 months before reaching the full production wage. Out of pocket health costs for workers hired after 2021 would rise sharply.

The actions of Tuck and the Local 699 leadership underscore the urgency of Nexteer workers joining and building the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee, part of the

International Workers’ Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees. The committee issued a statement after the defeat of the second TA urging workers to attend Sunday’s Local 699 meeting to hold a vote to strike at 12:01 am Monday.

Workers must be absolutely clear-eyed about the intentions of the union leadership. It will block a strike if possible, and, if not, will work relentlessly to isolate and sabotage it. The entire membership must be mobilized to ensure that there are no further contract extensions or delays and a strike is called on Wednesday, May 20.

The Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee calls for workers to remove the current bargaining committee and replace it with a committee of trusted rank-and-file workers, chosen by shop floor workers, accountable to shop floor workers and negotiating openly on terms set by the workers themselves. This is part of a struggle to remove the bureaucracy and place the union in the hands of the rank and file.

The Committee calls on Nexteer workers to actively engage the full support of autoworkers across the US, in Mexico, Canada and internationally, including the honoring of Nexteer picket lines and refusing to handle scab parts.

The Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee urges workers to adopt the following demands:

- Abolition of all tiers. Equal pay and benefits for equal work.
- Immediate, substantial wage increases that exceed the rate of inflation, with cost-of-living adjustments.
- A living starting wage and rapid progression to top pay, not 24 or 48 months of poverty.
- Full healthcare coverage for all workers and their families. No premium hikes, no doubled weekly contributions.
- Enforceable limits on overtime, speedup and scheduling abuse.
- Job security and anti-outsourcing protections. Full transparency and the right to oppose the shifting of work to lower-wage operations.
- Workers’ control over safety and staffing, with elected rank-and-file safety reps empowered to stop unsafe work.
- Explicit, enforceable prohibitions on cycle-time surveillance and the use of tracking data for discipline, job elimination and speedup.



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