

Nexteer workers denounce UAW bureaucrats after forcing strike authorization vote

Barry Grey
19 May 2026

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.

Nexteer auto parts workers in Saginaw, Michigan have voted down two sellout tentative agreements brought by the United Auto Workers bureaucracy and forced national and local union officials to call a strike authorization vote for May 20 and 21.

The highly exploited and low-paid workers, who produce critical steering components for some of the Big Three's most profitable models, erupted in anger at a meeting of UAW Local 699 on Sunday following the overwhelming rejection of the second TA last week. The workers defied International Rep Jason Tuck, who cursed them and threatened them with the closure of the plant if they went on strike.

Tuck, who was the Local 699 bargaining chairman for the concessionary 2021 contract before being promoted to his lucrative position in the UAW international apparatus (he took in over \$148,000 last year), fled the meeting "with his tail between his legs," as described by workers to the *World Socialist Web Site*.

The WSWS spoke to Nexteer workers, who expressed both their disgust with the union leadership and their determination to fight for improved wages and conditions.

A skilled trades worker with three years at Nexteer said:

I want to vote for a strike. Production workers are not getting enough money, I believe. We all need to stick together and make the company make it right.

I don't think it was very professional for

Jason Tuck to walk out of Sunday's union meeting. It puts a bad taste in my mouth, especially after some of the comments he put on Facebook back in 2015, when we had to strike back then. He was basically saying, yeah, we need to go on strike. Yes, we need to stick together. Yes, we're union brothers and sisters. And now his attitude completely changed, and it's kind of sickening.

Currently we're working under the old contract, and I understand they don't want to back pay us.

We're still a key part of the assembly process. I mean, we're still a supplier. We're still small-time and not like American Axle, but we're still a supplier. We're still UAW. We're still, making parts for the Big Three.

Everyone took a hit during the recession when GM took the bailout. And I think we need to gain that back, especially with inflation and cost of living today. Something has to happen, it really does.

A veteran production worker said:

Local 699 has taken concessions for the last 15 years. The increase they claimed was a raise was just starting to get us in the right direction to where we should be. And with inflation the way it is now, that increase wasn't even enough for the cost of living, especially since the increase would not even be back-dated.

And what they claimed was a \$3,000 grievance settlement wasn't, because if it was

truly a grievance settlement, then that was already every eligible employee's money and should have been paid out. Why were they using a grievance settlement for a negotiating ploy? In my eyes that is fraud and not negotiating in good faith. Why is our union lying to its membership to get what I would call an unfair contract?

A young worker added:

I'm going to make the meeting tomorrow. We're going to ask questions about strike protocol when we vote. I just found out management is hand-picking employees to have meetings with and asking what they'd want in a TA 3. They just want to divide us.

Workers are furious after suffering 50 percent wage cuts, the elimination of their cost-of-living escalator, sharp increases in healthcare costs, hundreds of job cuts, and the imposition of multiple tiers since General Motors hived off its Delphi division in 1999 and the plant was sold off and renamed Nexteer in 2010. All of this was done with the full collaboration of the UAW bureaucracy, whose only concern was to maintain the flow of union dues into its coffers.

The UAW called off a strike in 2015 after only 20 hours. The TAs rejected by the workers this year would keep the pay of new-hires at the destitution level of \$19.50 an hour and cap pay for senior production workers at the poverty wage of \$27 an hour. Healthcare costs of workers hired after 2021 would increase sharply. In addition, the company is implementing computerized cycle-time surveillance of workers in order to enforce speed-up, something that is not contested in the contracts being pushed by the union officialdom.

The Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee is urging workers to register a massive strike vote while placing no confidence in the union officials to conduct a fight against the company. It is calling for the formation of a rank-and-file strike committee to enforce an immediate strike deadline and take measures,

including sending pickets to other parts plants, as well as assembly plants, to mobilize nationwide and international support for the fight at Nexteer. It is also calling for the removal of the current bargaining committee and election of a new committee consisting of trusted and militant shop floor workers.

Dana and American Axle workers have already voted overwhelmingly to authorize strike action, and contracts are expiring at other parts companies in the coming days. A strike at Nexteer could spark a wave of strikes in auto and cripple production at the Big Three.

In a statement last week, Will Lehman, a Mack Trucks worker from Pennsylvania who is running for UAW president against Shawn Fain and the UAW apparatus, hailed the Nexteer workers' rebellion against the bureaucracy and called on them to build their rank-and-file committee and "coordinate with autoworkers across the US and internationally, including parts workers with expiring contracts, to honor Nexteer picket lines and refuse to handle scab parts."



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact