

Join us to expand the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee! Support Will Lehman's insurgent campaign for UAW president!

Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee
9 July 2026

On June 26, United Auto Workers Local 699 officials narrowly pushed through a fourth tentative agreement at Nexteer Automotive after workers at the Saginaw, Michigan auto parts factory defeated the UAW's first three attempts. In the course of the three-month struggle, a group of militant workers formed the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee to oppose the sabotage by the UAW bureaucracy. The following is a statement from the committee on the fight ahead and its support for Will Lehman, the rank-and-file Mack Trucks worker and socialist who is running for UAW president. Workers can contact the committee

at <https://tinyurl.com/nexterrfc> Email: nexterworkersrfc@gmail.com or Text: (947) 622-2198

Brothers and Sisters,

It has been two weeks since UAW officials narrowly rammed through the fourth Tentative Agreement (TA) by resorting to the most underhanded methods, including holding the vote in the plant and lying to us about the content of the four-and-a-half-year deal. Now everyone in the plant is living with the consequences of this illegitimate vote: stolen vacation time, bonuses promised to new hires that never materialized, new threats to our jobs, and speed up.

The last three months made one thing clear: the UAW apparatus, from the International and Region 1D down to the Local 699 stooges, serves Nexteer, not us. That is why we formed the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee and why we urge you to join our committee and build a movement to put power in the hands of shop floor workers.

The last three months have also shown us we are not alone. Other workers at Dana, American Axle, Bridgewater Interiors, American Axle and other parts suppliers are revolting against the UAW bureaucrats too. And, like parts workers, GM, Ford and Stellantis workers are sick and tired of constant job threats, inflation and a union that sells them out too.

From the beginning of our struggle, Will Lehman, the rank-and-file Mack Trucks worker who is running for UAW president, warned us that there are two distinct forces in the UAW: the workers who do the work and pay the dues, and the UAW apparatus, (the bureaucracy) that is made up of hundreds of highly paid officials who live off our dues and are bribed by the companies to sell us out. Management wouldn't get what they want if they didn't get cooperation from the union leaders.

Will Lehman was with us every step of the way, urging workers to vote down these sellout deals, throw out the Local 699 bargaining committee members and build the rank-and-file committee to take the conduct of the fight into our own hands.

The immense gulf between the rank and file and the UAW apparatus was demonstrated at the UAW convention last month. While refusing to lower our dues and voting against any substantial raise in strike benefits, the UAW bureaucracy increased the salaries of UAW President Shawn Fain and other International Executive Board members by \$10,000 to \$30,000. They also voted to divert more money from the strike fund for their own purposes.

But something else happened at the convention: the voice of the rank and file burst through the bureaucratic dam and Will was nominated to run for UAW president. The Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee fully endorses Will and calls on workers to vote for him. Will is not running to get a cushy job at Solidarity House, he has already said he will stay on the line if elected. He is running to abolish the corrupt, pro-company bureaucracy and transfer power and decision-making into our own hands.

The Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee is not going away. We want you to join us because our struggle is only beginning. We are demanding:

- **Reinstate Antwiane Sanders** who was victimized for opposing the sellout and criticizing UAW International Servicing Rep Jason Tuck. He must get full back pay, with

no strings attached. Recall Tuck. No official who uses management to fire a worker belongs in our union.

- **Restore our 32 vacation hours.** ESTA sick time in addition to, not stolen from, what we already had.

- **Zero layoff policy.** If management brings in automation to boost productivity, then reduce the workweek to 30 hours with no loss of pay.

- **Rank-and-file control of health and safety,** including our right to stop production in oppressive heat

- **Make the bonus whole for every worker whose vote was solicited,** including the new hires who got nothing.

Open your pay stub. Thirty-two vacation hours, four full days we earned—are gone. Nobody from the union said a word before the vote; workers found out on their first checks. When we asked, we got two words: “gray area.”

There’s nothing gray about it. Michigan’s Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA)—the voter-initiated law the state Supreme Court restored—was set to take effect February 21, 2025. It guaranteed up to 72 hours of paid sick time a year and the right to sue an employer who violated it.

Instead, in a late-night session on February 20, the Legislature passed a rewrite championed by an employer coalition led by the Michigan Chamber of Commerce—the same business interests that speak for companies like Nexteer, whose own US operations chief sits on the board of the Michigan Manufacturers Association. Governor Whitmer, endorsed twice by the UAW, signed the watered down version the next morning as Public Act 2 of 2025, retroactive to 12:02 a.m.

The rewrite kept the 72-hour sick time requirement but stripped the enforcement—and gave companies a green light to count an existing PTO bank as compliance. So Nexteer didn’t add sick time. It took ours: **carved 32 hours out of our vacation and re-labeled it.** Vacation time is ours—we schedule it, we use it, and it’s paid out if we leave. “Sick time” comes with strings: approved reasons only, documentation demands, and zero payout when you go. At \$23 an hour, 32 hours for 1,700 of us is roughly \$1.25 million a year, money Nexteer keeps every time those hours go unused. They call it a gray area. We call it a heist.

That’s not all. Our first two paychecks are based on our old hourly wage; but the union deducted our dues based on the new higher hourly rate. Our checks do not include retroactive back pay owed to us from March 27, when our last contract officially expired. Promises of holiday double-time and double-and-a-half time for working July 3, 4 and 5 were not honored. Our union dues were deducted twice this month, once from our bonus and again from our paycheck. Double-dipping?

What happened to our bonuses?

The \$3,000 ratification bonus was dangled in front of young workers and new hires desperate to make ends meet on poverty wages. Then the bonus checks arrived. Taxes took 33.9 percent. Two-and-a-half hours’ pay was deducted for union dues—the bureaucracy took its cut off the top of the very bonus it used to sell the deal. What was left came to about \$1,900: more than a third gone before it ever touched our hands.

New hires were told to vote yes for a bonus most would never see. Only workers past 90 days qualified, but new hires’ votes were counted all the same. They were used to ratify the contract, had dues pulled from their second check, and got nothing. Now a growing number are being fired under the new attendance regime before ever reaching eligibility. Vote yes, pay dues, get terminated.

At every turn, our rank-and-file committee and Will Lehman called out what was coming and explained what to do. That is why Local 699 officials and Region 1D continually complained about the rank-and-file committee and “unauthorized” social media platforms. There is nothing these bought-and-paid-for officials fear more than workers having information and organizing to defend our interests.

Everything we have been through proves what Lehman warned from the start: the apparatus cannot be reformed. It must be dismantled and replaced by rank-and-file committees in every plant—accountable to the membership.

His campaign is not about one election. It is the organized form for building a network of rank-and-file committees connecting workers in every workplace and every country. This is a campaign of workers, for workers.

Join the Nexteer Workers Rank-and-File Committee. Get involved in Will’s campaign for UAW president. Talk to your coworkers. Take up this fight today.

Web: <https://tinyurl.com/nexteerrfc>

Email: nexteerworkersrfc@gmail.com

Text: (947) 622-2198



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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