Oppose the death threat against UAW presidential candidate Will Lehman!

International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees
20 July 2026

On July 16, Raymond L. Jensen Jr., a high-ranking official of the United Auto Workers, posted a death threat against Will Lehman, the socialist Mack Trucks worker and candidate for UAW president. The threat was an AI-generated image posted on Lehman's public Facebook campaign page depicting Lehman bound with rope and gagged, blood running from his mouth, with a masked man aiming an automatic rifle at his back.

The International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) calls on workers and all defenders of democratic rights to denounce this incitement to violence against Will Lehman and demand its unequivocal public repudiation by the UAW.

Jensen's threatening post cannot be brushed aside as the act of a deranged individual acting on his own. Jensen is an organizer on the staff of the UAW. Until recently he was the assistant director of UAW Region 9, the region to which Lehman belongs. He was paid approximately $202,000 in total compensation in 2025, according to the union's LM-2 filings with the US Labor Department. He is a prominent supporter of UAW President Shawn Fain, and his Facebook profile displays an "I Support Shawn Fain" campaign badge.

Lehman is an officially certified candidate for UAW president, nominated on June 18 at the union's 39th Constitutional Convention in Detroit. He is campaigning on a platform calling for the abolition of the union bureaucracy, the building of rank-and-file committees in every plant and the transfer of power to workers on the shop floor. In the last election, in 2022, Lehman received nearly 5,000 votes, despite the fact that turnout was systematically suppressed by the apparatus and barely 10 percent of the UAW membership voted.

On Friday, Lehman's attorney Eric Lee sent a letter to the court-appointed UAW Monitor's office demanding a full investigation. It states:

> When a highly paid functionary of the incumbent administration, publicly identified with the president's re-election campaign, posts an image of the opposition candidate gagged, bleeding, and under the gun, the message transmitted to the UAW membership is unmistakable: extreme violence against Will Lehman is encouraged and enjoys the sanction of the union leadership.

Under federal law, such a posting is a crime. Transmitting a threat to injure another person over the internet is a federal felony under 18 U.S.C. § 875(c), punishable by up to five years in prison, and threats of violence are likewise criminal offenses under state law. In addition, 29 U.S.C. § 530 makes it a federal crime to use or threaten force or violence to restrain, coerce or intimidate a union member for the purpose of interfering with their rights.

On Sunday, Lehman responded with a statement warning that if a threat of this character can be made openly against a candidate for the union's highest office, "then no worker who challenges the bureaucracy in their own local is safe."

The threat is part of a pattern. Less than one month ago, the federal Monitor, Neil Barofsky, found that Fain "inappropriately used the powers of his office" in an "abuse of his authority," documenting a "recurring pattern of retaliation," including the removal of Vice President Rich Boyer on charges Fain "knew were false

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when he made them." A federal grand jury is now investigating Fain.

The Monitor has also found that the leadership perpetrated a "toxic climate of retribution" and that Fain personally threatened to "slit" the "throats" of anyone who "messed" with his inner circle.

The long history of violence directed by union bureaucracies against rank-and-file opposition is well known. As for the UAW, the Monitor's office itself exists only because of the apparatus's record of criminality. It was installed under a consent decree with the federal government in 2021, following a corruption investigation that sent more than a dozen union officials to prison—including two former UAW international presidents—for embezzlement, kickbacks and the taking of bribes from the auto companies.

The IWA-RFC endorses the demands advanced in Lehman's statement:

• A full investigation of the posting, encompassing not only Jensen's conduct but the knowledge, encouragement or acquiescence of the UAW leadership.

• A public repudiation of the threat by the UAW in the strongest possible terms, a formal apology to Lehman, and an unequivocal public declaration—circulated to the entire membership—that the union recognizes and fully supports Lehman's right to conduct his campaign.

• An immediate public statement by the Monitor's office warning that such threats will not be tolerated and announcing that an investigation has been initiated.

• The immediate suspension of Jensen from his position without pay, pending completion of the investigation, with all appropriate legal and disciplinary sanctions to follow.

• Referral of the matter to the Department of Labor and, as warranted, to federal law enforcement.

• Affirmative measures to guarantee that the remainder of the 2026 election is conducted free of intimidation.

The IWA-RFC calls on UAW members and workers in every industry, in the US and internationally, to take up the defense of Lehman as their own cause. As Lehman stated: "This threat is not aimed at me alone. It is an act of intimidation directed against the entire rank-and-file opposition."

The IWA-RFC also calls on all left-wing and progressive organizations to categorically denounce this threat.

Register your opposition to this incitement to violence! Email the UAW at feedback@uaw.org to demand that it publicly repudiate the threat against Lehman, with a copy to the Will Lehman campaign at info@willforuawpresident.org.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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