UAW PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WILL LEHMAN SUES UAW AND MONITOR FOR VIOLATING MEMBERS' RIGHT TO VOTE IN NATIONAL OFFICERS ELECTION



BY WILL LEHMAN
Mack Trucks worker and rank-and-file candidate for UAW president

On Thursday, November 17, Will Lehman filed a federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan demanding that the UAW and the court-appointed Monitor overseeing the election delay all voting-related deadlines by 30 days due to widespread reports that workers are unaware of the election and that the mechanism for mailing ballots has broken down. Lehman is also demanding the UAW and Monitor take real action to inform the entire membership that the election is taking place.

With less than 48 hours remaining before the deadline to mail ballots, turnout is only 91,000, roughly 9 percent of eligible UAW members. This is because the entrenched UAW leadership is not taking real measures to inform members of their right to vote or to provide them with ballots in a timely manner.

In Lehman's motion for a temporary restraining order and/or preliminary injunction, Lehman asserts:

> ***The current UAW leadership—and the Monitor, by failing to take necessary action—have denied Lehman and other rank-and file UAW members the right to meaningfully vote in a leadership election that genuinely expresses the will of the membership. An election cannot express the genuine will of the membership where the bulk of the membership has not been notified that an election is taking place at all, and in which numerous eligible members have not received ballots in time to meet the deadlines that have been imposed. Unless action is swiftly taken to guarantee the right to vote, whatever leadership emerges from this election will not be legitimate, "duly-elected" or in any way representative of the rank-and-file members of the union like Lehman.***

Lehman's lawsuit includes affidavits and statements from many workers who did not receive a ballot even after requesting one from the Monitor. That process has failed.

Lehman's attorney, Eric Lee, said, "91% of UAW members haven't voted and the deadline to mail ballots is tomorrow. This is the first direct election for UAW national officers, and members are unaware it is taking place. They are not able to easily request ballots. This means the rights of every single UAW member to participate in a meaningful election have been violated. The entrenched leadership of the UAW will try to blame low turnout on worker apathy,

but the reality is the leadership doesn't want the membership to have a fair shot to vote it out of office."

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