WILL LEHMAN SUBMITS ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE OF VOTER SUPPRESSION IN UAW ELECTION TO UAW MONITOR



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

The following letter by Will Lehman was sent to the court-appointed UAW Monitor tasked with overseeing the union's elections. On December 19, Lehman filed an official protest over the conduct and results of the first round of the election, documenting evidence of voter suppression by the UAW bureaucracy. We urge workers to read and share the protest and submit your statements supporting the challenge to the election results.

Dear Monitor:

It has now been a month since I submitted my protest over voter suppression in the first round of the UAW national officer election, and I have still not received a response.

In the month since I submitted my report, rank-and-file UAW members and former members have been submitting very concerning reports to you with information proving that the UAW did not adequately update the Local Union Information System (LUIS), contrary to the claims your office made to the federal court when I brought my lawsuit asking for an extension to voting.

The following information creates the presumption that it was common for UAW Locals not to take action to update the LUIS system. To overcome this presumption, I am therefore demanding that your office provide me with an audit of what actions every single local took to update the LUIS system.

LOCAL 2320—PROTEST BY BENJAMIN BROWN

I received documentation from Benjamin Brown who emailed your office on December 21, 2022, to report that his local, Local 2320, has done nothing in over five years to update LUIS. This union has almost 5,000 members, and this means possibly thousands were disenfranchised in the first round of the election.

Mr. Brown is an attorney and was bargaining chair in Local 2320 in New York state. He wrote to you that he has not been a member of the UAW since May 2017:

> ***Shockingly, I received a ballot for the recently held Local 2320 elections as well as the international elections—more than 5 years after I quit my unionized employment and more than 5 years since I have been a member of either Local 2320 or the UAW overall. This reflects troubling disorganization as well as a lack of elections integrity, because I am ineligible to vote in these elections and the membership list has apparently not been cleaned up in more than 5 years.***

Mr. Brown also explained to your office:

> ***When I was a member of Local 2320 and a bargaining unit chairperson, I noticed two significant problems with the Local's membership list: New members of the union were too often not added to the list, and departing members were too often not removed. I was aware of the issues and raised them back when I was a bargaining unit chair person. But I never expected that the dysfunction was so significant, or the leadership so deaf to my contemporaneous efforts to raise these concerns, that I would still be on a membership list used for elections more than 5 years after I departed.***

Mr. Brown concluded his letter:

> ***The stakes are far too high, the historical moment too decisive, working peoples' adversaries too dangerous, to accept anything but high responsibility, competence, conscientiousness, work ethic, and integrity of people in union leadership positions. Don't the UAW and its locals deserve leaders like that? Maintaining a well-organized and up-to-date membership list is basic. The goal should be to avoid leaving anyone behind, giving every dues-paying member the opportunity to participate. Every local, every vote.***

Mr. Brown emailed this list to your office and to the UAW. That same day, December 21, the UAW replied via email by dismissing his concerns as follows:

> ***Mr. Brown, Thank you for reaching out to us. The UAW is not in control of this election. Please forward all complaints to the court appointed monitor. Please shred the ballot, thank you again for letting us know. If you receive another one please write us again. Happy Holidays.***

Mr. Brown informed me that your office never replied to him.

Mr. Brown also informed me that when he was still a UAW member he filed a complaint on December 6, 2015, with UAW official Gordon Deane demanding that the UAW take action to update its lists, on the grounds that members were not receiving adequate information about local elections. On December 21, 2015, Mr. Deane informed Mr. Brown that he was discharging the complaint without taking any action and without forwarding the complaint to the local's executive board. On that date, Mr. Deane wrote:

> ***Attached is my reply to your letter of December 6, 2015. On a personal level, I'm disappointed that you felt it necessary to pursue a formal appeal—without even attempting to find out any more information about how the election was conducted before filing your complaint.***

This shows the UAW's entrenched leadership systematically attempts to suppress efforts to update its email list, including through veiled coercion. Mr. Deane was subsequently promoted from the position he held at the time he wrote this letter to national leadership. He is currently Assistant Director of UAW Region 9A. This shows that the entire entrenched leadership's attitude to good faith efforts by UAW members to update the LUIS system is one of hostility. It also shows that large numbers of locals took no real measures aimed at sufficiently updating their lists.

LOCAL 1264 AND LOCAL 869—PROTEST BY MICHELLE NADASKY

In November 2022, Michelle Nadasky of Local 1264 in Sterling Heights, Michigan, wrote to your office to raise serious concerns about the maintenance of the LUIS system at her local. Ms. Nadasky began working at Local 1264 in April 2022 after transferring from another UAW local, well before the national officers election took place. She first called your office on November 1 and November 11. As a result of your office's delay in getting back to her, her vote was not counted.

Ms. Nadasky received a ballot from her old local, not her new one, indicating that both locals had refused to update their membership lists.

Aside from violating her right to vote, this also raises serious concerns about the veracity of information your office gave to Judge David Lawson in federal court at a hearing on November 22.

On December 2, 2022, Ms. Nadasky wrote you an email with the subject line "Updating membership list":

> ***Good afternoon, this is Michelle Nadasky, Welder Repair Apprentice at Sterling Stamping Plant. I would like to know if the Monitor's office has access to the UAW's LUIS system so that they have the most accurate membership list, provided by the UAW, available to them? The Financial Secretary of Local 1264 here at Sterling Stamping insisted that he updated the LUIS system in June of this year 2022, and added me as a member. I don't believe that to be true. The last time I spoke to someone at the monitor's office was 11/16/22 and her name was Grace. She had no record of an update and still had me listed under Local 869.***

But in federal court six days after Grace told Ms. Nadasky that no LUIS update had taken place, Michael Ross, attorney for your office, said, "The LUIS system has information about all the members that is inputted through the local unions. There's 600 plus local unions that input information about members," clearly implying that all locals were updating LUIS. See pages 30–31 of the hearing transcript.

This is greatly concerning, because if Ms. Nadasky called your office and was told by "Grace" that "she had no record of an update" to LUIS, then your office knew that some locals were not updating LUIS but did not tell the judge, and instead told the judge that all the locals were inputting information about members.

Ms. Nadasky contacted me and told me that "11/16/22 is when Grace called me and told me for the first time I was Local 869 and there was no record of me ever being a member of Local 1264." Your office then sent her a ballot, which she immediately filled out and mailed. She tracked the ballot and learned that it was never scanned. In other words, because the locals did not update their membership lists in LUIS, her vote was never counted. Only on January 4, 2023, did the UAW finally update her information, well after the election.

Local 1264 has over 2,000 members ,and Local 869 also has about 2,000 members. In other words, these two protests show that locals representing almost 10,000 members were definitively not updating LUIS.

This is further proof that hundreds of thousands of UAW members—perhaps up to a million—never received a ballot, and that the UAW's entrenched leadership was engaged in a systematic effort to stop rank-and-file members from voting.

During the ballot counting in Dayton, Ohio, in early December, Mr. Glen McGorty, a representative of your office, informed me that it was "not my responsibility" (in his words) to ensure that any local had taken any action to update LUIS.

Yes, it is. Please send me your audit of every local to show what specific actions each local took to update the LUIS system. Also, I reiterate my demand that a revote be held with actual notice to the entire membership and all candidates' names on the ballot.

Regards, Will Lehman

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Get involved with the rank-and-file campaign in the UAW elections.

willforuawpresident.org/get-involved