LETTER TO UAW MONITOR: WORKERS REPORT UAW VIOLATING FEDERAL LAW BY TELLING TPTS THEY CANNOT VOTE



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

On Tuesday, November 1, I sent the following letter to Neil Barofsky, the Monitor appointed by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan to oversee the conduct of the UAW. The letter demands that the Monitor investigate reports from workers that UAW officials are telling Temporary Part Time (TPT) workers (also known as "Supplemental Employees") that they cannot vote in the UAW elections.

If you are a TPT worker who has had similar experiences, contact me at willforuawpresident@gmail.com.

Dear Mr. Barofsky,

I am bringing to your attention a matter of utmost importance regarding reports of violations of federal law by the UAW in restricting the right of UAW members to vote in this election. On behalf of Temporary Part Time (TPT) members of the UAW, I ask that you conduct an immediate investigation into this matter and take swift action to remedy the violation of the workers' right to vote.

Rule 5-1 of the Election Rules states: "Members who work only part time but pay the required dues may not be denied the right to vote." Section 401(e) of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act also states that all members in good standing "shall have the right to vote for or otherwise support the candidate or candidates of his choice, without being subject to penalty, discipline, or improper interference or reprisal of any kind by such organization or any member thereof."

My campaign has heard from multiple workers that elected UAW officials at Detroit Assembly Complex-Jefferson (formerly JNAP) in Detroit (UAW Local 7) and the Detroit Assembly Complex-Mack (UAW Local 51) are telling TPTs that they do not have the right to vote in the election for International UAW officers.

At Detroit Assembly Complex-Jefferson, a worker contacted my campaign and volunteered information that at least one UAW shop steward is "telling TPTs they can't vote." This worker reported that a TPT asked out loud whether they could vote in the elections, and the "answer was a no." (See attached text discussion dated Friday, October 28.) There are roughly 4,500 workers at JNAP, and a substantial portion are TPTs, indicating that thousands of workers could be disenfranchised.

At Detroit Assembly Complex-Mack, workers are reporting the same violation of the right to vote. According to these workers, multiple TPTs are saying that at least one UAW official is informing TPTs that because they do not get profit sharing, they are ineligible to vote in the election. One worker reported to my campaign that a UAW official is telling TPTs that if they receive ballots in the mail, that they should not fill them out or mail them. The Mack Avenue plant has roughly 5,200 workers and a high rate of TPTs, also indicating a high rate of disenfranchisement.

The workers who stepped forward with this information asked to remain anonymous because they are fearful that the UAW and/or their employer will target them for retribution. Pages 409 and 410 of the UAW-Stellantis contract from 2019 make clear

that TPTs can be fired for any reason within a year of being hired. Because they have no rights and because the UAW regularly treats them like second-class citizens who can be fired easily, it makes sense that these workers are reticent to step forward publicly.

There are other issues of concern at these plants which indicate an intention on the part of the UAW to suppress the vote among TPTs.

Local 7 (JNAP) has no reference on its website to the UAW election. Its calendar (See attached) does not even include the election or any of the critical deadlines associated with the balloting process (checking ballot, mailing ballot, etc.). Rule 2-4 of the Election Rules states that Local Unions must give "Notice of Election." It reads: "Local Unions shall either post the informal notice or a link to the UAW's or Monitor's website regarding the Election. The informal notice shall (1) provide members with key information concerning the 2022 Election, including the nomination process, schedule, and other relevant information; and (2) direct members to the websites, where they may view these Rules and obtain up-to-date information regarding the 2022 Election."

Furthermore, it appears that Local 51 is promoting and endorsing a candidate for UAW president on its Facebook page. Rule 4-6 of the Election Rules says: "Federal law prohibits the use of any union or employer resources to promote the candidacy of any person in a union election." This includes "computer equipment and networks" like Facebook pages. Section 401(g) of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act also prohibits such activity.

These violations compound concerns over what workers are reporting to my campaign regarding UAW officials telling TPTs they cannot vote in the election. Because we are less than a month away from the deadline for ballots to be sent and because these reports indicate that the UAW may be systematically telling TPTs that they cannot vote, this matter requires swift action in order to ensure the fairness of the election. TPTs pay dues and are just as much a part of this union as full-time workers. It is high time they be treated like human beings with rights.

I therefore demand that you require the UAW publish a statement asserting that Temporary Part Time workers are eligible to vote in the international election, and that each UAW local be required to email its entire membership notifying them of the election deadlines and clarifying that TPTs have the right to vote. I ask that this be done by November 7, so that TPTs have time to ensure they receive ballots on time to cast their votes in this critical election.

Thank you, Will Lehman

If you are a TPT worker who has had similar experiences, contact me at willforuawpresident@gmail.com.

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

willforuawpresident.org/get-involved