

MIOSHA whitewashes death of Ford Rouge worker Tywaun Long, as industrial slaughter rages on

Tim Rivers
16 September 2024

Tuesday marks five months since the tragic death of Tywaun Long at the Ford Rouge Dearborn Truck Plant on April 17, 2024, at the age of 46. An autopsy found that Long had died of a massive heart attack. Long was in perfect health, with no history of heart disease or underlying medical conditions of any kind, according to his family.

Tragically, this past weekend saw the funeral of yet another autoworker, Jimmy LaWayne Carter. Carter worked at the Stellantis Sterling Heights Assembly Plant and would have turned 50 this December.

After Carter's funeral, the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with Cheborah Long, Tywaun Long's widow. Coincidentally, Cheborah was a childhood friend of Carter's and was shocked and saddened by his death.

Cheborah said that Tywaun had no history of heart disease or any other underlying health condition that would have brought on the heart attack that killed him. "I know that he caught COVID at work," she said. "He did not go out. And the whole family were masking religiously to protect my mom, who lives with us. He took very good care of himself, did not drink or use drugs of any kind. He would not take an aspirin for a headache. The only place he could've got COVID was Ford Motor Company. And he was very sick with COVID in the fall of last year."

Infectious disease researchers have found that even a "mild" COVID-19 case can significantly impact the heart and the entire vascular system. A study of tens of thousands of COVID-19 patients' records in the Veteran Affairs system found that those with COVID-19 were 2.4 times more likely to suffer a heart attack 30 days later compared to those who had the flu.

"All they care about is the profits from the trucks they are building"

A report from the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (MIOSHA) provides a cynical whitewash of the conditions in which Long's early death took place.

Cheborah recently received a letter from MIOSHA that stated:

On August 16, 2024 the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) General Industry Safety and Health Division concluded its investigation surrounding your husband's death. During the investigation, our agency was unable to determine that the cause of the fatality was a hazard covered by MIOSHA regulations; therefore, no violations of MIOSHA Standards were cited.

With this letter, MIOSHA included a recommendation that an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) machine be supplied within a short walk from every line in the factory for the emergency treatment of the potential victim of a heart attack.

The letter stated:

Compliance with safety and health regulations is the responsibility of the employer. The employer is urged to ensure all emergency response carts are equipped with an AED, and readily accessible in the event of a medical emergency. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration encourages an AED be readily available in the workplace to provide medical response to employees who may experience sudden cardiac arrest.

Cheborah denounced the conclusions in MIOSHA's report, saying, "They said he died of natural causes. But what was unnatural is that they do not have an AED unit that is accessible in a plant of more than 7,000 employees. Not even the medical staff that is supposed to protect the employees knows CPR. All they care about is the profits from the trucks they are building."

pay me until my son finishes high school, but they cannot provide benefits until Social Security has been exhausted.”

“Tywaun Long is a victim of corporate America’s industrial slaughterhouse”

“Tywaun Long is a victim of corporate America’s industrial slaughterhouse,” said Jerry White, the Socialist Equality Party’s vice presidential candidate.

“Every day, 15 workers die in the US from traumatic injuries on the job, according to the CDC. This is no doubt a major underestimate of the real toll of fatalities related to working conditions.

“The corporations and the financial aristocracy subordinate everything—including workers’ health and lives—to the endless pursuit of profit and personal wealth.

“In the auto industry, the UAW bureaucracy has overseen and enabled the continual decline in working conditions, making the eight-hour day a thing of the past. The ‘historic’ contracts pushed through by UAW President Shawn Fain last year have allowed the companies to lay off or fire thousands, while drastically increasing the workloads of those who remain.”

The Socialist Equality Party’s campaign insists that workers have “inalienable” social rights, White said, including the right to a healthy and safe workplace. “But these rights and other rights can only be secured through the fundamental reorganization of economic life, a vast redistribution of wealth and the fight by workers for political power.”

“Workers are getting up every morning thinking that if something happens to them on the job, their family members will be okay. But that is not true.”

Cheborah described the difficulties she has faced receiving financial support from Tywaun’s life insurance policy, saying, “They are giving me the runaround financially. For me to have to fight with somebody about something that is rightfully mine so that my son and I can be okay financially is crazy.

“Workers are getting up every morning thinking that if something happens to them on the job, their family members will be okay. But that is not true.

“Even if I win nothing, I want to get the point across to the other workers that your family is not secure. You are giving them 40, 50, 60 hours a week and if something happens to you, your family is screwed. If your wife is my age or younger, she gets nothing for 12 years.

“Social Security sent me a letter saying that my son turned 16, and I do not qualify for Social Security to take care of him. Then I called MetLife, and they said that Social Security has to

“Too many people that are working on the shop floor are going down”

Cheborah denounced the brutal conditions in the plants and the disregard for human life of both the global auto giants and the United Auto Workers union bureaucracy, which acts like a company police force both on and off the shop floor.

“His co-workers at the funeral home were talking to us about Tywaun and relaxing with the family. When the union showed up, they started to leave. It was as if they felt threatened. They have a lot of nerve to come to Pee Wee’s family hour [Pee Wee was Tywaun’s nickname] and tell me a bold-faced lie about how he died.

“I believe the union came to intimidate his coworkers who came there. Before the union people got there, they were socializing. They were talking to my family and my in-laws. When they saw the union officials, they were making their exit quickly. It was like they were threatening them or something. Why were they rushing to leave a family hour?

“I have a question for the employees at any of these auto companies: Would you guys actually go to work and be committed to a job that’s not committed to you when you know where you’re going your family is not secure? I just don’t see them getting up going to work and doing that.

“The day that Tywaun died, the staff at Corewell Hospital in Dearborn said over and over that ‘the President of Ford Motor Company ordered an autopsy.’ But when I went to pick up a copy of the autopsy report, they changed their story. The lady at the morgue said the STATE OF MICHIGAN ordered it. She was rude and aggressive saying the state can do whatever they want with a body.

“Just because you have a heart attack does not mean you have to die. I had a heart attack 15 years ago, and I’m still here. Too many people that are working on the shop floor are going down, and there is no one there to help them. Even the medical staff in the plant did not know CPR. They did not have an AED machine.

“There has to be a full investigation into the death of my husband by a committee of rank-and-file workers that can be trusted.”



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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