

Expand the Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee! End the blackmailing of workers and job cuts!

Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee
14 January 2025

Over the last year and a half, the UAW bureaucracy has continued to divide workers within each company and local. UAW President Shawn Fain came down to Kokomo, his hometown, to continue his sham “Keep the Promise” campaign, but explained nothing about the reason for the job losses nor the nine+ hour days we continue to work!

Since the “Stand Up Strike” there has been no information provided on further sellouts, contract betrayals or job losses. We voted 97 percent to all go on strike—Ford, GM and Stellantis together! But the “Stand Up Strike” divided us up and kept us off guard, but it did not impact the companies, who continued to profit.

The current situation facing our brothers and sisters at the Starplus battery plant in Kokomo shows what this “historic contract” was really about.

StarPlus Energy and UAW benefit from leasing employees

Stellantis’s and Samsung’s new joint venture was created to produce new EV batteries. The campaign drive by Shawn Fain to unionize the battery plants was only to keep the UAW’s dues stream flowing. Stellantis will be laying us off in several rounds by leasing us to StarPlus. Literally, in their letter it says, “All hourly employees of STARPLUS ENERGY will be separated. Concurrently all employees will be offered full-time employment by Stellantis, which will then lease your services back to STARPLUS ENERGY

under our new employment arrangement.”

The UAW said nothing about our future. By GM backing out of the Lansing Ultium plant, it put the status of the 100 workers up in the air. What happens when Stellantis also decides to change its mind? Fain earlier this month told us the whole situation we are in was the fault of Carlos Tavares. He implied that now that Tavares has been forced out, the violations of our contract are over. But in reality, he was forced out by shareholders only because he didn’t cut costs fast enough. Fain didn’t say anything about the workers that were permanently laid off earlier this year. Some were flipped, supposedly based on “seniority,” but then they were permanently laid off.

Our brothers and sisters at the plant told us that they were sold a bag of lies about safety. They say they are working with constant safety issues that are never addressed. With constant OSHA violations continuing, nothing is done to make things safer. You can drive by the plant and almost twice a week there are fires there!

Acting like human resources, the UAW has these recruitment meetings to push us to go work at the battery plant. They change our employment status and our pay when working in the StarPlus plant. The form they give is an effective threat to either be leased out to Starplus, like a piece of equipment, or have no job and be denied unemployment for refusing to be leased out. Either way we lose our current job and seniority. If you’re on indefinite layoff and refuse to be leased out, they will cut your sub pay and deny Indiana unemployment as well. The company did this purposely by keeping those of who are laid off out indefinitely and using that to starve us and make us take a lower wage at the battery plant. All the lies that

the UAW is protecting seniority were exposed by all the layoffs at the end of the “Stand Up” sham.

Global fight to defend the right to a job

We are not alone in losing our jobs. 35,000 of our brothers and sisters at Volkswagen in Germany are losing their jobs as well. Like the UAW bureaucracy here, their union IG Metall gave their blessings to management. Just like here they said that no plant will be closed. They don't say anything about loss of benefits for thousands of workers losing their jobs.

All the attempts of reforming the union with the UAWD and others is a way to push us back to the bureaucracy, while they wash their hands from betrayals. We saw what happened to Delphi when GM spun off the parts plants. Throughout the Midwest workers at Delphi had their wages, retirement and healthcare benefits gutted. They were the test case used by the auto companies on how to cut costs and boost profits. Stellantis is doing the same with us at the battery plants.

The US is at war for resources. Lithium, cobalt, nickel and other elements that go into these batteries are in countries like Ukraine and Russia. We don't want to fight our brothers in sisters in Russia, China or anywhere else. We need our own independent organization to share information. The UAW supports the government and the wars abroad while telling us nothing! But we have the power because we outnumber them!

Build the Stellantis Kokomo Rank-and-File Committee!

We founded this committee to unite workers across this city, the auto industry and workers internationally. We exposed the “Stand Up” strike and the role of the UAW bureaucracy. As we said earlier this year, “With our brothers and sisters of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC), we

are for abolishing, not reforming, the UAW bureaucracy, to put power into the hands of the workers.”

With our brothers and sisters in the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) we raise the following demands:

- Immediate release of the list of planned plant closures!
- Not a single job loss or plant closure in the transition to EV!
- If EVs require less labor time to produce, then reduce hours and increase pay!
- Unite across borders to prevent a race to the bottom!
- Place the auto industry under social ownership subject to democratic workers control!

Workers from KEP, KTP, ITP, Casting and the StarPlus plants and workers more broadly, join us to defend our right to a job!



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