

An Open Letter to President Ron Gettelfinger and the International Executive Board, UAW

Dear President Gettelfinger and Officers of the IEB,

In one of the best examples of internal democracy that our union has witnessed in years, tens of thousands of our members employed by the Ford Motor Company stood tall and voted “no” on November 2, 2009 to a new round of concessions. Sending a resounding message to Ford management with an unprecedented show of solidarity, production and skilled trades workers voted 70% and 75% respectively against Ford’s demands. Thus did the Ford workers reject the continuous slide downward in the “race to the bottom,” a goal which has eluded the UAW for many years.

We believe the heroic act by UAW-Ford members, guided as they were by the dictates of their own conscience at a time of severe economic crisis, should be praised as an example from which UAW members can learn important lessons. The thousands upon thousands of loyal UAW members who rejected the appeals by the UAW leadership to concede more to Ford must be heard from! This is of utmost importance as we approach the UAW’s 35th Constitutional Convention in June.

We believe the absence of any mention of this historic vote and its implications in the pages of the most recent Solidarity magazine (January-February 2010) is a disservice to UAW Ford members and to the entire rank and file and retirees of our union. Our membership, including every Ford worker, pays for Solidarity’s publication and is therefore entitled to see in its pages information and analysis about the Ford workers’ decision. At a time when we are in need of transparency and accountability, we instead got what amounted to censorship.

We, the undersigned, therefore request that the next publication (or a special issue) of Solidarity be devoted to a detailed report of what transpired with the November vote, including the events leading up to the negotiations, the terms of the tentative agreement, the meetings held with local UAW leaders at national council meetings (where they advised against the new round of concessions), the actual votes plant by plant, and the expressions by elected local leaders and the rank and file during and after the vote.

Thus can the entire UAW membership appreciate and evaluate the historic Ford vote, and consider its implications for the union’s future at the 35th Constitutional Convention.

In solidarity,
(signed)
See back

SIGNATURE

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COMPANY & LOCAL UNION

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Please mail to Mr. Ron Gettelfinger, Solidarity House, 8000 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48214
Please forward a copy to Autoworker Caravan c/o 7435 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MI 48210