

To our Local 23 UAW Sisters and Brothers

Greetings and Solidarity,

We are writing to express our deep respect and admiration for your acts of solidarity and courage in the face of tremendous pressure. We applaud Local 23' bargaining chair and committee for their strength.

As former (and current) Local Union Presidents, Shop Chairs and other elected representatives, we have witnessed the incessant drumbeat for concession after concession. None of us have ever thought that concessions were the answer to the problems faced by the auto industry, or any industry for that matter. We knew that labor costs were only about 8-10% of the cost of a vehicle. If we worked for free, the industry would have continued to have problems.

Workers and their unions struggled throughout the 1900' to *raise* the standard of living for working people –to create a comfortable life for themselves and their children. We fought for our fair share of the pie and thereby created the “merican Dream”- a life where people were permitted vacations, health care and safe jobs. These jobs helped bring about a “iddle class”existence for working people and the ability to send our kids to college. Before the union movement, workers did not have respect and dignity on the job or a decent standard of living. Children of workers rarely went to college. We earned these things through struggle.

Still, workers have given up pay and benefits over the last 20+ years, in an effort to try and help their employers. But it has never been enough. Now we see everything we struggled for being taken away. The “ream”is being dismantled before our very eyes. But where is the “quality of sacrifice”

If the situation is so dire, why aren' those in power leading by example? Are GM execs willing to take a 50% pay cut? Is JD Norman saying he and his managers will take a 50% cut in pay if they buy the plant? The answer is obvious to us. No, they'e not. They want you to. What we have seen in the last 40 years is a growing disparity between the rich and the rest of us. Those at the top cannot continue to get wealthier unless the rest of us give up more. And that is what they want us to do. That is why we stand in solidarity with you in this struggle. A line must be drawn. If you give in, it will be used to whipsaw other plants especially GM Stamping Plants into taking equal or greater concessions. Suppliers and other businesses will pressure their employees to take cuts in the never-ending ”ace to the bottom.”If you stand strong, it will help everyone.

It appears to us that you have made your wishes clear. In our democratic union, the wishes of the majority must be respected. You have our deepest respect.

In Solidarity,

Jerry Tucker, Former UAW Region 5 Director

Tom Laney, Retired former President & Floor Rep. Local 879, St. Paul

Bruce Allen, Vice-President, Canadian Autoworkers Local 199, St. Catharines, Ontario

Gary Walkowicz, Local 600 Truck Plant Bargaining Committee

Vern Hetz, Local 2093 retired Bargaining Rep. Three Rivers, MI

Charles W. Maynard, Vice-President of Local 686, Lockport, New York

Pam Gmyr, UAW Local 465, Union Representative, Massena NY

Victor Bean, Former Local 600 General Council Delegate

Al Benchich, Convention Delegate, Retired Former President, L. 909, UAW

Dean Braid, former Education Director, UAW Local 599, Buick City, Flint

Jeff Brown, former Suggestions Rep, Local 3000

Ali Canada, former Bargaining Committee Member, UAW Local 849

Mandy Cohen, Head Steward UAW 2865, Academic Student Employees of the University of California

Mark Farris, former Unit Vice President and Convention Delegate, L. 600. Milan Plastics

Yvonne Gomillion, retired former EAP Rep., Local 909 and mother of Local 23 member Roy Gomillion

Martha Grevatt, former Trustee and Civil Rights Chair, UAW Local 122, Twinsburg, Ohio

Ernie Hite, former district committeeperson and convention delegate UAW Local 663.

Jeff Hodges, UAW Convention Delegate L. 3000 and former shop committeeperson

Ron Lare, former Local 600 Exec Bd Member

Allen Sonny Myers, former UAW Local 849 Trustee and Guide

Herman Rosenfeld, Local 303, GM Scarborough Van Plant, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada

Jessica Taal, Unit Chair, UC Berkeley, Local 2865.

Wendy Thompson, Convention Alt., L. 22, UAW, Retired Former President, L. 235, UAW, American Axle, Detroit Gear & Axle,

Bob Weissman, former President, Chrysler Stamping Local 122, Twinsburg, Ohio

Judy Wraight, former Local 600 General Council Delegate

Dick Danjin, Union Representative 1971 through 1998 (retired)

Frank Hammer, retired UAW Int'l Rep., former Pres. & Chair, GM Powertrain Local 909, Detroit

Joseph Gaw, former President UAW Local 499, member of Locals 371, 2075, 287, 499, and 23

Barbara Julien, UAW Local 292, former Trustee and Executive Board Member

Douglas Wells, UAW Local 2164, former member Local 1097

Roger Long, former UAW representative Local 2031

Eli Friedman, UAW Local 2865, representing Academic Student Employees at the University of California Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley

Steven Schwab, Executive Board Member, UAW Local 699

Cassandra Calvert, Local Union 2209 Past Financial Secretary

Lindsay Hinshelwood, CAW Local 707, candidate for CAW-Ford Oakville, Ontario Assembly Plant

Al Gardner, former Chairman of the Tool & Die Unit, Local 600 UAW from 1978 to 1988

Erwin Baur, former UAW Local 160 President

Pete Kelly, former UAW 160 President

Larry Christensen, UAW-Chrysler Local 140, Chief Steward

Jan Dean, retired Local 2164

Marcus Hamilton, District Committeeperson, Local 5960, Lake Orion

Cathy Huff-Abney, District Committeeperson and Delegate, Dearborn Truck, L. 600

Bob Weinert, former Shop Committeeperson, Local 22

Tim England, former Zone Committeeperson Local 2250

Mary Donovan Springowski, District Committeeperson, UAW Local 2000, Delegate to Constitutional Convention and Special Convention (e.g. Bargaining/Negotiations Convention) candidate for Vice President 2010

Robert L. Morris Jr., Convention Delegate and Bargaining Committee Member, Parts Depots UAW Local

Elly Leary, former chief negotiator and vice-president of L. 2324, Boston U.

Terry Wilcox, former District Committeeman Local 1853

Larry Goldbetter, President UAW Local 1981 / National Writers Union

Bill B Alford Jr. former President Local 235

Tom Shaw, former Vice-President, Local 262

Bill Carr, former President Local 160

Gregg Shotwell, former Convention Delegate, L. 2151, retired L. 1753

Suzanne Brown, former President, L. 594, Pontiac Truck & Bus