



Dear UAWD members and supporters around the world,

We are a group of UAWD members who are a part of our caucus' class struggle wing, including the Steering Committee minority and other rank-and-file members. We'd like to address the underhanded effort being led by the Steering Committee majority to dismantle our organization, provide our analysis of what we believe are the real motivations behind their call, and share our vision of how UAWD can continue with a class struggle mission.

UAWD Steering Committee members Scott Houldieson, Chris Budnick, Alex Bruns-Smith, Eric Truss, Nick Livick, Deneen Brewer, and Ben Hinsey, who either ran on or supported the "UAWD Strong" slate that won last year's Steering Committee elections, have publicly stated that they are bringing a "resolution to dissolve the caucus" to our April 27 Membership Meeting. You can read their statement [here](#).

Such a resolution would need to be proposed as an amendment to the [UAWD Bylaws](#). As a result, it would need to first be introduced at the April 27 meeting, and then would require a 2/3 vote at the subsequent summer membership meeting to pass. In other words, the proposal to dissolve the caucus via a simple-majority vote at a membership meeting amounts to a violation of our Bylaws. We don't believe the Steering Committee majority is acting in good faith, or offering solutions on how to pursue "different visions," but rather organizing a coup attempt disguised with a democratic veneer. But procedure is not the real problem here.

Through the election of Shawn Fain and the recent gains in fighting tiers, corruption, and concessions, the Steering Committee majority is pleased that we've reinvigorated the glory days of Walter Reuther with a new left labor bureaucracy. Instead of moving beyond Reuther's mixed legacy, which includes suppressing worker militancy, they're welcoming its return to full strength. At a time when the working class should be coming together to fight the onslaught of new attacks from bosses and the Trump administration, the Steering Committee majority is retreating instead of leading us toward class struggle.

How did we get here?

UAWD is an organization that started with straightforward reform goals to combat corruption in the UAW, with a [public-facing platform](#) that also included some more radical political commitments. The organization brought together a coalition of long-time socialists, active militant workers, shop floor leaders and activists, and reform-minded union staff, across UAW's broad sectoral reach, primarily in manufacturing, higher ed, and legal services. After [winning One Member, One Vote](#) in 2021 and campaigning in 2022-23 to elect Shawn Fain and the rest of [our slate](#) for the UAW International Executive Board (IEB), many of us realized that, to meet the current political moment, reform is not enough. **We must fully embrace a class struggle approach.**

In early 2023, we were thrilled that Fain created many openings for this approach, for example through clear denunciation of the ruling class and organizing the Stand Up Strike, where he used his position to amplify UAWD's call for a [shorter workweek](#), which came out of open discussion within our caucus. But even during that time, we heard less and less from the UAWD members on the IEB that we campaigned to elect. The co-optation of UAWD's rank-and-file movement by the leaders we campaigned for was beginning, widening a split between the class struggle and reform-centered wings of the caucus.

UAWD's first major moment grappling with political independence came when UAWD, during a membership meeting, narrowly [voted to stay neutral on the Big 3 Tentative Agreement](#), after Shawn Fain argued that UAWD should recommend a "yes" vote and "own the victory." Since then, UAWD has had tense debates about un-endorsing Margaret Mock and Rich Boyer, who are UAWD members on the IEB that were shown to have abandoned our caucus principles. To the reform wing's frustration, the caucus ultimately voted overwhelmingly at a membership meeting to un-endorse the [two IEB](#) members. Throughout these revelations about Mock and Boyer, and others relating to the [inappropriate meddling of the UAW Monitor](#), Fain pressured UAWD to stay silent and let Fain and his team handle the situation^[1] — creating further tension between a reform wing that



to build a lasting class struggle movement, these experiences reaffirmed that we have to build a democratic caucus that answers to the rank-and-file rather than the UAW administration — allowing for open support and criticism as we choose, and organizing workers for the long-haul.

We now find ourselves in a moment in which the working class is under an intense and growing attack from the ruling class, currently led by the Trump administration: manufacturing workers are threatened with mass layoffs from EV policy reversals and uncertainty from nationalist trade policy; immigrants face deportation; crack downs on organizers and Palestine supporters are intensifying, with activists being snatched up by federal agents and sent to detention facilities, threatening our First Amendment rights to free speech and assembly; federal workers and the NLRB are being brazenly attacked; and much more. Unfortunately, our UAW leadership is also feeling this pressure, as shown by their [recent support](#) of Trump's sweeping, protectionist tariffs, which will ultimately harm Mexican, Canadian, and US workers and create painful inflationary pressure.

It's clear to us that the Steering Committee majority's retreat and the country's right wing turn are connected. At this moment, the working class must be more united than ever and understand that all workers' fights are connected. By fighting for social justice, we are fighting for the working class. We remain committed to UAWD and still see it as a beacon of class struggle, democracy, and political independence — a tough project, but one that's worth fighting for collectively even when we disagree.

Responding to the Steering Committee majority statement

Since the motivation for dissolution was not made clear by the Steering Committee majority in their statement, we're going to share what we think is going on:

- **Administration Caucus (AC) alignment.** When he was attacked during the Stand Up Strike, Fain and his team looked inward to the bureaucracy to make alliances, instead of building a working relationship with UAWD and the rank-and-file militants who helped get him elected. As early as June of 2024, [\[2\]](#) Shawn Fain told the UAWD Steering Committee, when asked who he would like to have on his slate in the next IEB election, that he was impressed by multiple AC members and thought they would be assets. This move toward the old guard appears to be a defensive maneuver in response to growing criticism of the Big 3 contracts and an acknowledgement of the tight margins of his election. Now, the UAW administration is facing additional pressure from Trump administration attacks, pushing them to close ranks further. By working to shut down the class struggle wing of UAWD, the Steering Committee majority is trying to quash dissent in advance of the 2026 IEB election. The open endorsement meetings that UAWD held to build our first slate would create significant pressure against this AC alignment and openly tarnish the reputation of UAWD reform-wing leaders for supporting top-down AC loyalists.
- **Dysfunctional organization?** The Steering Committee majority asserts that it has become impossible to work together. But UAWD's ongoing [leadership training](#), active Organizing Committee spanning over 10 manufacturing locals across 6 companies, our [Electric Vehicle Committee's recent educational training](#), our recent [Stellantis Keep the Promise](#) support campaign, and our [2028 General Strike committee](#) all speak to the contrary. Many of these efforts have been led by members of the SC minority and other signatories of this letter. These are not the hallmarks of a dying organization. If you really want to do something, you'll find a way. If you don't, you'll find an excuse.
- **Scapegoating non-manufacturing workers and Palestine organizing.** The UAW has organized in sectors beyond manufacturing for over 50 years. One of UAWD's strengths is that it brings together all UAW members. All of our wins have come out of the opportunity to learn from each other's knowledge and shop floor organizing. The urgency of opposing the genocide in Gaza and workers' willingness to fight for Palestine at the workplace, particularly in higher-ed and legal services, is not a distraction but an organizing opportunity and another way to bring workers together across sectors. Even given its importance in certain Locals and sectors, UAWD staff and leadership have put in very few hours total into Palestine organizing. We have to be adamant that it is simply false that Palestine organizing has displaced other efforts in UAWD, and that this is a scapegoating narrative meant to mislead.
- **"Bread and butter" vs. "politics."** To us, the Steering Committee majority's plan to build a "grassroots network of shop-floor organizers" focused on leadership development, contract fights, and local elections sounds a lot like the model of Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU). That's not



favor of bread and butter fights, one of their core projects through TDU. Bread and butter doesn't mean much besides incremental gains through contract fights and enforcement, rather than the chance for workers to fundamentally change the world around them. We believe building up local organizers and winning material improvements are core to our struggle, but our issue is that a TDU-like model trades access to the UAW administration in exchange for loyalty. Case in point: TDU's endorsement of and then subsequent unquestioning support for Sean O'Brien, despite his right-wing, racist, and nationalist positions.

- **Careerism.** Large unions like the UAW have a powerful, top-down bureaucracy that is able to hand out staff positions, which massively improve a person's pay, job stability, and livelihood. Top bureaucrats also support local union campaigns in exchange for political obedience. It is easier to stay obedient and be rewarded with a job when there is no longer an independent, democratic caucus to answer to.

Ultimately, all these reasons have led the Steering Committee majority to try to consolidate power and restart a top-down organization, which can preserve and strengthen their relationship with the Fain administration. In truth, we would have welcomed an open conversation about our political differences, and starting an internal discussion about a change in focus or even a collaborative split, but that's not what the SC majority has done. The labor movement is still [weak](#), and the practice of disciplining the left is a regrettable throughline that only hurts our forces. What might seem like short-term expediency amounts to long-term disorganization and co-optation.

What does class struggle unionism mean to us?

In this time of political uncertainty for our organization, we feel it is also important to be clear what we mean as we rally others to fight for a class struggle UAWD. As we think about our future, we invite those inspired by this message to read our ideas about class struggle and collaborate with us on developing them further:

[Our thoughts on class struggle unionism](#)

We believe that class struggle is an ongoing effort we take collectively against the ruling class, through bottom-up organizing on the shop floor and in communities, to win the collective liberation of the working class around the world. It is rooted in vehemently opposing sexism, transphobia, racism, xenophobia, nationalism, and all types of divisions used to pit the working class against itself. We believe a reimagined UAWD can be a base for such class struggle action.

Where does UAWD go from here?

The voice of class struggle in the UAW cannot be silenced by this attempt to shut off the virtual lights and to lock the virtual doors of UAWD. We believe that we should use this opportunity to truly build a class struggle caucus in the UAW, unwavering in its commitments to the ideals listed in the document [linked above](#). We will organize to continue UAWD with a newly elected leadership committed to carrying out a class struggle platform. Even when we disagree, UAWD has succeeded so far because of its ability to always meet the moment through democratic deliberation. Whether the coup being led by the Steering Committee majority succeeds or fails on April 27, we know that we must chart a path forward toward **class struggle** unionism. Anyone who shares this vision, please reach out to us so we can plan this future together.

Solidarity forever,

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Judy Wraight, UAW Local 600, Region 1A, Ford retiree, UAWD Steering Committee
Andrew Bergman, UAW Local 22, Region 1, GM worker, UAWD Steering Committee
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Toly Rinberg, UAW Local 22, Region 1, GM worker, Co-chair of UAWD's EV and Organizing Com.
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Jonathan Larson, ACT-UAW Local 7902, Region 9A, NYU worker
Jake Scarponi, UAW Local 2322, Region 9A, WPI worker
Ben Rosenfield, UAW Local 2325, Region 9A, Urban Justice Center (UJC) worker
Amelia Spooner, UAW Local 2710, Region 9A, Columbia University worker
Austin Chadwick, UAW Local 4100, Region 9A, Columbia University worker

[Sign-on here](#)

[1] Signatories of this letter who serve on the UAWD Steering Committee and were present at this meeting affirm that this is true.

[2] Signatories of this letter who serve on the UAWD Steering Committee and were present at this meeting affirm that this is true.