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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA – UAW

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SHAWN FAIN, *PRESIDENT* • MARGARET MOCK, *SECRETARY-TREASURER*  
VICE-PRESIDENTS: CHUCK BROWNING • MIKE BOOTH • RICH BOYER

August 28, 2024

[Via Email](#)

UAW Family,

Last week, we launched our campaign to make Stellantis [Keep The Promise](#) they made to America's autoworkers.

In our 2023 contract, we won major gains, including an unprecedented commitment to reopen an idled assembly plant in Belvidere, Illinois. We also won the right to strike over those commitments. Now, the company wants to go back on the deal. As a united UAW, we intend to enforce our contract, and to make Stellantis Keep The Promise.

Seventeen Stellantis UAW locals covering tens of thousands of members have now filed grievances with the company to enforce our 2023 agreement. As of today, two of those grievances have progressed to the third step, while eight others have moved to the second step. We are ready to enforce this contract.

And the company knows it.

The day we filed those grievances, [in front of a live audience of over 50 million viewers](#), UAW President Shawn Fain put the company on notice:

*“Corporate greed is alive and well in the auto industry. Last fall, we achieved life-changing gains in our strike at the Big Three. We even won a commitment to re-open a closed plant, not too far from here. We were able to do that thanks to the support of Kamala Harris and Joe Biden and the thousands of autoworkers that went on strike.*

*But a year later, one company wants to go back on their commitments in our contract. And let me be clear, Stellantis must keep the promises they made to America in our union contract. And the UAW will take whatever action necessary at Stellantis or any other corporation to stand up and hold corporate America accountable.”*

On August 21, we received the tragic news that one of our brothers working at Toledo Assembly was killed on the job. This never should have happened. Brother Antonio Gaston was in Toledo as a transferee out of Belvidere. He never should've been there. And he never should've lost his life on the job.

We are supporting Brother Gaston's family in this horrible time, and we encourage you all to [donate what you can to his family](#) and keep them in your prayers.

On August 22, we visited Antonio's home local in Belvidere to rally with the members there and share information about how we planned to make Stellantis Keep The Promise. Over 200 members showed up to show the company we are united and ready to fight like hell.

The next day, Stellantis CEO Carlos Tavares had planned to visit SHAP, supposedly to talk about "quality" issues. Not quality of life, or job quality, but quality of the product, for which he blames the workers, despite cutting staffing to the bone and buying the cheapest parts available.

We asked to meet with Tavares while he was in town, but he refused. So we decided we'd [rally outside the plant](#), and invite the media to hear what's really going on at this company. Next thing we know, Tavares is nowhere to be found. No-call, no-show. And he wants to complain about worker absenteeism? As we've said before, if any autoworker did as piss-poor a job as Carlos Tavares, they'd be fired.

Instead, the company sent an email to all Stellantis employees threatening that "a strike would be illegal."

Let's be clear: we have the right to strike over product and investment commitments. Stellantis wants to go back on their product and investment commitments.

The company keeps changing the reason why they can't keep their contractual commitments.

The company claims there are architectural problems with retooling Belvidere.

Well, that's mismanagement, not a reason not to keep their obligation to the UAW.

They claimed that our grievances aren't timely. That's bullshit. Every day that the company refuses to meet their obligation is another day they are violating the contract.

They have claimed they don't need a battery-powered electric vehicle, but at the same time they claim they need a mid-size ICE vehicle on the market right now.

Well, Belvidere was slated to build both.

And lastly, Stellantis management is claiming "market conditions" won't let them move forward with keeping their promise at Belvidere.

But where were those "market conditions" when CEO Carlos Tavares gave himself a 56 percent raise, making him the highest paid auto executive outside Tesla?

Where were those "market conditions" when GM and Ford posted strong sales and profits in the same market?

Where were those “market conditions” when Tavares said that “North American operations are basically funding the rest of [Stellantis]”?

If the market is the problem, how and why is the company announcing 20 new products for that market?

The problem isn’t architectural designs.

The problem isn’t electrification.

The problem isn’t how or when we filed our grievances.

The problem isn’t the market.

The problem isn’t any of the shifting responses the company is giving us.

The problem is Stellantis management.

The problem is Carlos Tavares.

Our fight right now is about Belvidere. But it impacts all of us.

If this company can violate their commitment to Belvidere, what will they violate next?

We rise and fall together. As Stellantis employees, as UAW members, and as a united working class.

Let’s make Stellantis Keep the Promise and stick together until we get justice for Belvidere and autoworkers everywhere.

In solidarity,



Shawn Fain  
UAW President



Kevin Gotinsky  
Director, UAW Stellantis Department