



## *Inter-Office Correspondence*

May 2, 2023

**TO:** All UAW Employees

**FROM:** Shawn Fain

**SUBJECT:** Talking points on President Biden and EV's

Last week, a team of UAW leadership and staff traveled to Washington DC to meet with members of the Biden Administration, along with several members of Congress, and express our concerns with the electric vehicle transition. I want to share some reflections on that visit, and some guidance on our union's message regarding President Biden's re-election campaign.

In Washington, I explained to Congress and the White House how plant closures and idlings, like at Ford's Romeo Engine Plant, Stellantis's Belvidere Assembly Plant, and GM's Lordstown Assembly, turn our members' lives upside down, forcing workers to choose to take a buyout, retire, or transfer, uprooting their families and communities.

We emphasized the need for any EV shift to be a "just transition," where the workers who make the auto industry run aren't left behind. I also spoke of how the companies have formed joint ventures to build electric vehicle batteries not just for technology but also to undermine our master agreements and their commitment to our members. We were very adamant that if the government is going to funnel billions in taxpayer money to these companies, the workers must be compensated with top wages and benefits. A "just transition" has to include standards for our members and future workers. These jobs should fall under our master agreements, and our members should have rights to this work.

At Ultium in Lordstown, Ohio, a joint venture formed by GM, the company is currently hiring employees at \$16.50 an hour, with a seven-year progression to \$20. Our message to the representatives and the Biden administration was that this is not a just transition. This is not an acceptable standard to set. These workers should not be getting paid half of what Lordstown Assembly workers made just a few years ago. EV jobs are often dangerous, and require years of training; if anything, they should be paid higher than production wages. The situation at Lordstown, and the current state of the EV transition, is unacceptable. We expect action from the people in power to make it right. I want to make sure our staff are armed and ready with the same tone and message.

Below are draft talking points that we can distribute to make sure our staff are all speaking from the same playbook across the union, so there is no question about the UAW's intent and why members come first, before all politics.

**UAW talking points on Biden's presidential campaign and to all elected officials:**

Context: On Tuesday, April 25th, Joe Biden announced his reelection campaign for the US Presidency in 2024. Several national unions were quick to endorse. The United Auto Workers is not yet making an endorsement.

**Talking points:**

- In September, 150,000 auto workers will be fighting for a new contract with the Big Three companies, who are making record profits while workers get left behind. **We'll stand with whoever stands with our members in that fight.**
- The federal government is pouring billions into the electric vehicle transition, with no strings attached and no commitment to workers. The EV transition is at serious risk of becoming a race to the bottom. **We want to see national leadership have our back on this** before we make any commitments.
- Right now, **we're focused on making sure the EV transition does right by our members, our families, and our communities.** We'll be ready to talk politics once we secure a future for this industry and the workers who make it run.
- **Another Donald Trump presidency would be a disaster.** But our members need to see an alternative that delivers real results. We need to get our members organized behind a pro-worker, pro-climate, and pro-democracy political program that can deliver for the working class.

SF/JF:kmt  
opeiu494afl-cio