

US auto union warns of more last-minute strikes as Detroit talks drag

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UAW President Shawn Fain, shown at a rally last weekend in Chicago, warned the union could launch more last-minute strikes on Detroit's 'Big Three'

The US auto workers union announced Friday no new strike targets, but the group's president said the labor action had entered a new stage

involving last-minute walkouts.

"We're entering a new phase of this fight, and it demands a new approach," United Auto Workers (UAW) President Shawn Fain said in a webcast briefing.

The message to the companies is, "don't you dare slow-walk or low-ball us," Fain said. "We will take out whatever plants they force us to."

The remarks came two days after the UAW announced an immediate walkout at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville where some of the company's most profitable models are built.

The action saw 8,700 workers walk off their jobs, bringing the total members on strike to nearly 34,000.

The UAW launched a targeted strike on September 15 on Detroit giants Ford, General Motors and Stellantis, initially taking down one plant at each company.

The union expanded the strike on the two subsequent Fridays following a Fain webcast.

But Fain said the latest pivot was necessary to drive progress in negotiations, noting the companies became accustomed to waiting until Friday to offer significant concessions.

The Kentucky action came after Ford had "for two weeks" spoken of sweetening its economic offer, which includes a 23 percent wage increase over the course of the contract, Fain said.

But when both sides met, Ford offered the same terms as two weeks earlier, he said.

"Taking out Kentucky truck sent a very clear message not only to Ford, but to GM and Stellantis as well," he said. "At this point in the process, we're interested in only one thing: a deal and a tentative agreement."

More temporary layoffs

On Friday, Stellantis announced temporary layoffs for 700 more workers from plants in Kokomo, Indiana, as a result of the UAW strike at its Toledo, Ohio factory.

The company said it now has 1,340 employees on temporary layoff across three states.

Stellantis added that it had "made progress this week" on talks with UAW.

The company said the talks focus on narrowing the gaps on issues "that will bring immediate financial gains and job security for our employees while providing a bridge for the sustainability of the Company."

Ford had no immediate response to a request for comment after Fain's remarks.

But Ford held a media call on Thursday in which executive Kumar Galhotra described the company as not able to further boost its economic offer.

"We have been very clear that we are at the limit," said Galhotra, President of Ford Blue. He insisted that the [company](#) had not misled the UAW on its negotiating stance.

Ford has said the [strike](#) at Kentucky could damage the [supply chain](#) and result in layoffs of as many as 4,600 workers at other Ford facilities.

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