



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

RORY L. GAMBLE, *PRESIDENT*

RAY CURRY, *SECRETARY-TREASURER*

VICE-PRESIDENTS: TERRY DITTES • CINDY ESTRADA • GERALD KARIEM

May 20, 2020

TO: PRESIDENTS, VICE PRESIDENTS, FINANCIAL SECRETARIES, RECORDING SECRETARIES AND BUILDING CHAIRPERSONS OF ALL LOCALS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE UAW NATIONAL FORD DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: CORONAVIRUS TASK FORCE UPDATE #5

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

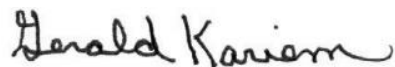
Over the past eight weeks, the International Executive Board, UAW National Ford Department, local leadership teams, and our membership have been pushed to the limit. We have all been hit hard emotionally, mentally, and spiritually by this terrible pandemic. Our UAW-Ford family has endured uncertainty with layoffs, virus infections and personal losses. Sadly, 11 UAW-Ford members have lost their battle with COVID-19. As we continue to mourn these losses, our prayers and sympathies go out to their families, friends, and communities.

I am well aware that the startup of our plants creates a vast amount of concern. It is Ford Motor Company's sole contractual right to determine the opening timetable for their facilities. However, we have the contractual right to protect our members at all costs and every argument and discussion was made with that protection oath in mind. The UAW-Ford Coronavirus Task Force continues to meet daily, and our focus will remain on health and safety protocols to protect our members. We will stay the course and continue to be vigilant moving forward. Every UAW-Ford Servicing Representative has been entrenched in a facility since Monday and will continue to do so until we feel confident that the safety protocols and enhanced protections are in place to protect this great membership. I personally will visit a few plants this week and I look forward to future plant visits in the coming weeks. Please continue to utilize your Servicing Representative for any assistance or questions during this startup period.

We are the UAW. We have risen to every challenge thrown our way since our founding in 1935. This institution has always rolled with the punches and punched above our weight. A perfect example is of how our Brothers and Sisters bravely volunteered over the last couple months to serve our communities and our nation by building respirators, ventilators, and masks. Furthermore, members who volunteered at our PS&L locations across the country and those who returned early to assist in getting the manufacturing plants prepared for startup should be applauded as well. Now is the time for us to shine and again show the country that you never bet against the American worker, especially the UAW member.

Like all of you, I have never experienced anything like what we are facing and could never have imagined living through a crisis like this. I want to personally thank every one of you for what you continue to do as leaders. I continually observe local leadership teams exhibiting an immense amount of needed Solidarity. Solidarity has always been our strength and the power of this union. All the meetings attended and decisions that are made by my team and I would be immaterial without your guidance, strength, and courage as we face the unprecedented challenges this pandemic brings. This is a critical moment in our history and the job you are doing as leaders is making it much easier for us to collectively show Ford Motor Company that we expect the very best for our members. Please stay safe, support one another, and remember that we are all in this together.

In solidarity,



Gerald Kariem
Vice President and Director
UAW National Ford Department

GK:kmt

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cc: International Executive Board
Regional Assistant Directors
National Ford Department
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