



# PRESS RELEASE

November 2, 2023

Contact: Ben Stein

[bstein@policymattersohio.org](mailto:bstein@policymattersohio.org)

(304)685-8354

## UAW wins put workers in the driver's seat Policy Matters researchers dig into details

The United Auto Workers have announced tentative agreements with each of the Big Three automakers that will set the terms of their work over the next four years and influence conditions throughout the economy. UAW members are now in the process of ratifying those deals.

The terms include sweeping changes to pay and benefits structures; improved job security; commitments to long-term investments in the communities where plants are located and workers live; progress toward a sustainable energy transition; and an end to divisive tiered pay structures that trapped newer workers in lower-paid jobs.

The UAW has long been a standard-bearer, securing high quality jobs for its members that delivered benefits to workers beyond its ranks. Now at the forefront of a resurgent and increasingly forceful labor movement, autoworkers are claiming a greater share of the wealth they've built at their companies and setting a high bar for job quality economy-wide.

Many of the contracts' details are not yet public and the agreements have not yet been ratified. Policy Matters Ohio experts commented on what we know so far:

**Economist Michael Shields:** "Year after year, Ohio working people have created record wealth on the job. But for two generations, [employers and the wealthiest have consolidated power in the job market and used it to capture nearly all the growth for themselves](#). The UAW has shown that, by organizing together, working people can reclaim their power and use it to create great jobs at the companies they make profitable. Policymakers should take note: They can and should [use public policy](#) to craft an economy in which working people set the terms of their employment."

**Climate & Sustainability Researcher Molly Bryden:** "Electric vehicles are expected to account for 40 to 50 percent of passenger car sales by 2030, affecting workers throughout the auto industry and its supply chains. But the pace of the transition to EV's is uncertain: The Big Three have announced over \$100 billion in EV and battery investments since 2021, but those investments have been inconsistent, the market volatile and the future unclear. Union workers have earned — and in these agreements, have won — more job security, better job quality and more of a say in how they make the transition, despite the unknowns.

**Research Director Zach Schiller:** "By eliminating wage tiers and improving wages and benefits for temporary employees, the union has made important gains in reducing divisions among workers that the auto companies had exploited in recent decades. That message should echo widely, which would end up benefiting not just UAW members at the Big Three auto companies, but workers all across Ohio and the nation."

Policy Matters research staff will examine details of the contracts as they emerge, and analyze the potential impacts on other workers in the manufacturing sector and beyond.

[policymattersohio.org](http://policymattersohio.org)

*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.*