

Ford chosen to lead 2026 contract negotiations with Unifor

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Ford will be first among Windsor's three large auto giants to negotiate worker contracts amid Canada-U.S. trade uncertainty.

Ford Motor Co. will be the first of the Detroit Three automakers to kick off negotiations with Canada's largest private sector union.

"Ford has always said we'd like to go first. We'd like to lead. Not all companies want to do that," explained John D'Agnolo, president of Unifor Local 200 in Windsor and chair of the Ford Master Bargaining Committee and Auto Council Chair. "We recognize that on top of that, Ford continues to follow through with their investments."

Unifor, which typically uses pattern bargaining for its auto sector negotiations, says talks with Ford will begin on June 22.

Negotiations with fellow Detroit Three members Stellantis and General Motors are expected to follow.

The union represents about 5,000 workers across Ford facilities in Canada.

All three companies and their workers have spent much of the last year grappling with U.S. tariffs on auto parts, steel and aluminum.

"You just don't know when the president will make another announcement," said D'Agnolo. "We'd like to get ahead of bargaining so we can see where we stand."

A contract is expected to be inked, whether or not a CUSMA deal is reached.

Another challenge came when the Carney government reopen the Canadian market to Chinese electric vehicles.

"As far as Unifor in the auto industry within Canada, we don't support Chinese vehicles," said D'Agnolo.

D'Agnolo's message to his members is to continue doing your job.

"When I meet with the company, that's one thing they talk about is our productivity and quality and our workforce," he added.

As for the Detroit Three automakers, "I'm looking forward to getting a deal and having a future here in Canada. They've always been here. They should never leave."