

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Warren Mayor Jim Fouts Calls on Governor Whitmer And Attorney General Nessel To Take Action Against Art Van For Abusing Employees

Warren, MI - Warren Mayor Jim Fouts released the following statement regarding ongoing complaints from Art Van employees alleging abuse and threats by the company in violation of guidance from the state and federal government with regard to dealing with the coronavirus:

“Since the announcement by the out-of-state investment group that now owns Art Van, that they were liquidating this once highly respected Michigan company, I have been receiving complaints of abuse from workers. Most of these complaints fly in the face of guidance from state and federal authorities designed to stop the spread of coronavirus and I believe puts workers, their families, and Art Van customers at risk of infection. These include limiting each worker to one sick day, forcing workers into workplaces with far above the limit of individuals in contravention of the Governor’s executive order, and threatening employees with immediate termination if they complain or don’t comply with these edicts.

So having already destroyed this great company, these economic vampires are now determined to bleed the last dollar at the expense of the safety of their workers and customers.

I have attached some of the Art Van employee emails and messages sent to me, to give a sample of what I have received in both phone calls and emails. The emphasis is that these employees appear to have been denied basic protections against the coronavirus and have been discouraged if not outright threatened with loss of their job if they either speak out or take more than one sick day. Currently it is difficult to see a doctor for a doctor's note so this demand rings hollow with Art Van employees.

Many of their calls and emails raise serious questions about whistleblower rights!

I call for immediate action from Governor Whitmer and Attorney General Nessel to join me to right this situation. I stand ready to assist them in any way I can to protect the workers and our community.

Workers' rights and safety should not be disregarded because equity investment profit appears to be the only criteria."