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Freefall: UAW Membership Declines Nearly 10 Percent

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The United Autoworkers Union (UAW) saw its membership ranks decrease drastically last year by nearly 10 percent according to a new [report from the Detroit News](#). According to the report:

“The United Auto Workers lost more than 35,000 members in 2018, a 9 percent decrease, according to documents filed Friday with the U.S. Department of Labor. The union said in the filing it had 395,703 members last year, down from 430,871 it had in 2017. It marks the first time in nine years the union has shrunk since its ranks reached a low of 355,191 in 2009 during the Great Recession. The fall in membership came even as 264,000 new manufacturing jobs were added in the U.S. in 2018. That was the most new workers in 30 years.”

The report also states that the UAW had more than 701,000 members in 2002, and last topped 500,000 in 2006.

Declining numbers are not unique to the UAW, as union membership trends in America [continue to decline](#). In fact, only 6.4 percent of private sector workers now belong to a union.

Membership also isn't the only problem facing the UAW, as it continues to deal with a recent [scandal involving allegedly mishandled funds](#) related to worker training. Those types of claims continue to be an [issue for big labor generally](#) as well.

Unions took another hit last year with a [Supreme Court ruling](#) that allows

public sector workers to decline paying union dues. This ruling likely is hitting the bottom lines of unions hard.

We will see whether big labor can find a way to reverse its recent misfortunes. Stay tuned.