

## FAIR SHARE REVISITED

### President Burrus Makes Solemn Pledge to Require Non-Members to Pay for Union Representation

By Fredric Jacobs, Editor & President



Frustrated with APWU represented employees that refuse to join the union, despite APWU successes, President William Burrus stated in his March/April 2007 APWU magazine article that it is his solemn pledge that if there is a permissible legal way to require non-members represented by the APWU and governed by the contract to pay their fair share, he would find it. On April 1, 2007, I faxed a letter to President Burrus regarding his article. I informed him that the Oakland Local believed that a legal way to require Postal Service bargaining unit non-member employees to pay "fair share" fees negotiated by the union to amend Title V § 7114 (a) (1) U.S. Code. I requested, on behalf of the Oakland Local, that he ask Congresswoman Barbara Lee to sponsor our bill or a similar bill drafted APWU Headquarters.

For most of my life it has been my conviction that union representation should not be free to some while others pay. However, as a union official, I have always obeyed the law and represented all employees under the auspices of the APWU. On December 9, 2003, during a small invitation-only gathering held in Oakland for East Bay area labor leaders, the opportunity arose that allowed me to receive a commitment from Congresswoman Lee to sponsor a bill that would require non-member Postal Service bargaining unit employees to pay fair share fees for union representation. The Oakland Local drafted a bill and submitted it to Ms. Lee's office on March 15, 2004, for her to sponsor. Subsequently, our Local launched a nation-wide campaign promoting the proposal. However, Ms. Lee decided not to sponsor the bill. The reason that was given to our Local was that APWU headquarters did not want the bill introduced during a time when Congress was controlled by the Republicans. The proposal went dormant, swept aside by the nation's preoccupation with the war on terror and the war in Iraq. If the bill had been introduced and passed, it would have amended Title V § 7114 (a) (1) of the U.S. Code.

The first attempt to require Postal Service non-union members to pay for union representation was on October 30, 1991. Bill H.R. 3672 was introduced in the House of Representatives by the late Patsy Mink, (D-HI) and referred to the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service on November 4, 1991. Nevertheless, no further action was taken on the bill.

With Democrats being majority in the House and Senate, President Burrus' solemn pledge, and the revival of the labor movement, hope has come alive! We must seize this opportunity to abrogate non-union members' rights to be lounge lizards. Again, I am urging all members, and their family and friends, to contact their Congressional representatives and ask them to sponsor the bill our Local drafted in 2004 (see page\_\_ ) or a bill prepared by APWU headquarters. A form letter to assist you in writing to your representative can be found on page \_\_. The Postal Service is the only business in the nation with bargaining units that are prohibited from having Agency Shop provisions in their bargaining agreements - this must end!