



**PRESS RELEASE – February 18, 2008**

Jill Malak, Public Relations Representative  
608-662-1444 ext 222  
608-770-0498

**A tale of two houses**

*Collective Bargaining Rights Bill stonewalled in Assembly, advances in Senate*

*Madison, Wis* – As the Wisconsin State Senate looks forward to a vote on the Collective Bargaining Rights Bill tomorrow, the Assembly is silenced as their companion bill is held up by Rep. Stephen Nass (R-Whitewater), the chair of the Colleges and Universities Committee.

Although the vast majority of public- and private- sector employees in Wisconsin have the right to vote on whether they would like to be represented by collective bargaining, this basic right continues to be denied to UW faculty and academic staff. Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) and Representative Jon Richards (D-Milwaukee) have introduced Senate Bill 353 and Assembly Bill 726 to extend to academic staff and faculty this fundamental right.

Rep. Nass's office has indicated that AB-726 will not receive a hearing this session, meaning **AB-726 is the only bill assigned to the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities that Chairman Nass refuses to hear despite repeated requests from bill sponsors for a hearing.**

"If Representative Nass were to support collective bargaining rights he could raise up 17,000 voices that could join in seeking justice within the UW system," said Warren Johnson, a UW-Green Bay chemistry professor and chair of the UW-Green Bay chapter of The Association of UW Professionals (TAUWP). "There is no valid justification for denying any of Wisconsin's citizens the right to decide for themselves if they wish to be represented by a union with collective bargaining."

"Rep. Nass deliberately stonewalls a bill that would resolve a major injustice against Wisconsin workers while issuing a statement calling the Board of Regents' decision to raise chancellors' salaries 'immoral,'" commented Bryan Kennedy, a former professor of Portuguese at UW-Milwaukee and president of AFT-Wisconsin.

"Rep. Nass should consider fine-tuning his own moral compass. The right to collectively bargain is widely recognized as a fundamental human right, and is outlined as such in Article 23 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Rep. Nass is single-handedly preventing a group of 17,000 Wisconsin citizens from exercising that right. He should be ashamed of this slap in the face of democracy," continued Kennedy.

Even as AB-726 is presently blocked in committee, its senate companion bill, SB-353, will likely receive a vote on the floor of the senate tomorrow. "We enthusiastically anticipate the senate floor vote of SB-353, and are confident that the senate will take the right action and pass this basic matter of fairness," stated Kennedy.