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American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

1300 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

SAN ANTONIO
LAW AREA LOCAL

January 2009

National Executive Board

William Burrus
President

Cliff "C.J." Guffey
Executive Vice President

Terry R. Stapleton
Secretary-Treasurer

Greg Bell
Industrial Relations Director

James "Jim" McCarthy
Director, Clerk Division

Steven G. "Steve" Raymer
Director, Maintenance Division

Robert C. "Bob" Pritchard
Director, MVS Division

Sharyn M. Stone
Coordinator, Central Region

Mike Gallagher
Coordinator, Eastern Region

Elizabeth "Liz" Powell
Coordinator, Northeast Region

William E. "Bill" Sullivan
Coordinator, Southern Region

Omar M. Gonzalez
Coordinator, Western Region

Dear Local and State Presidents:

I have forwarded the attached letter to APWU non-members. I ask that you reinforce the message, so that we can add their voices to our efforts in these difficult times.

Thank you.

In union solidarity,

William Burrus
President

WB/lbb(sd)
opeiu#2, afl-cio



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Dear Postal Employee:

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I struggle to think of words that are adequate to express the urgency of requesting that you to join with us to preserve the positive aspects of postal employment. Your involvement with your co-workers is urgently needed.

*I am certain that you have legitimate complaints about supervisors, upper management, workers who do not perform their duties appropriately, or union officials who do not uphold their responsibilities. But the challenges we face in the immediate future transcend these issues: **Your job is at stake.***

You and 40,000 of your co-workers have elected not to associate with our collective efforts. In the past, non-membership did not adversely affect you because you continued to receive the benefits of union representation. You casually accepted each contractual improvement, including the conversion of PTFs, upgrades, more than \$10,000 in pay raises over the past seven years, unexpected payment from grievance settlements, consecutive days off, annual leave exchange, protection against layoffs and much more. You and others evidently believed that these benefits were associated with your work effort and would not be improved through your involvement in the union.

*Perhaps your non-membership is in response to what the union has **not** achieved, such as full-time status for PTFs in small offices, an end to excessing, the absolute right to transfer, or the immediate removal of abusive supervisors. It is possible you elevated the importance of these unachieved objectives to such a level that they overshadowed all the accomplishments.*

Now, times have changed, and your job is threatened as never before. It is not my intent to cause you undue alarm, but you cannot ignore the economic turmoil affecting our country and the world. Workers just like you have had their jobs eliminated, lost their benefits, or had their hours or pay cut dramatically. Current news reports are chronicling the reduction of pay and benefits for auto workers from \$28 per hour to less than \$18 to make the Big Three automakers more competitive with non-union, foreign-owned manufacturers. Such changes are affecting workers in every sector, but the auto workers union is one of the most effective unions in history: If it can happen to them, it can happen to you.

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January 2009
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Yet as we struggle to maintain postal wages, job security, and benefits, you have refused to lend your voice and your support to our efforts. Whatever your reasons for non-membership – whether it is ineffective representation at your work site, political differences, or financial considerations – these reasons pale in comparison to the negative effect of 40,000 postal employees deciding that they don't care what happens to us.

You are undoubtedly aware that the Postal Service is experiencing a dramatic decline in mail volume, along with financial difficulties that are similar to those in the automobile industry. Postal management will respond to these challenges, and as they do so, employees must have a voice in the inevitable changes. Your only voice is through the union.

As we endure and influence the challenges that confront us, you and 40,000 like-minded postal employees will either join with your co-workers in presenting solutions that recognize the value of workers or you will risk suffering the consequences.

Once again, I ask that you lend your voice and your support to our collective efforts. Perhaps we do not meet your expectations in representing your interest, but we are all you have in these urgent times. Please join with us. You can stand alone and surrender or you can help make us better. No collective effort can reach its potential with 40,000 possible contributors electing non-participation.

*I ask that you rethink your non-membership status. I hope you conclude that you cannot **not** be a member. In these perilous times, you – and we – have too much to lose.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Burrus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" at the end.

*William Burrus
President*

*WB/lbb(sd)
opeiu#2, afl-cio*