

# WMU-AAUP

Western Michigan University  
Chapter of American  
Association of University Professors

## Update on Pursuit of Union Security Agreement

At the special Chapter meeting held on February 8, the Chapter membership overwhelmingly endorsed a plan to negotiate an agreement with President Dunn that would provide additional time for WMU to plan for and adapt to the Right to Work law passed during the lame duck session of the state legislature in December 2012. Time was of the essence for such an agreement as the legislation is set to take effect on March 27.

We have exchanged extensive written communication with Dr. Dunn, yet he has been unwilling to meet even to discuss the potential advantages and disadvantages of our proposal. While he wrote "I am always supportive of listening to others and open and frank conversation regarding matters of concern," he did not meet with us on this issue even though it was supported by 99% of the Chapter members at our meeting.

His rationale was that "the people of the State of Michigan have spoken directly relative to Prop 2 and indirectly through their elected representatives regarding Right-to-Work" and "I do not want to expose the University to any political backlash..." Furthermore he indicated that the Board of Trustees was involved on the issue already and that State Representatives were "threatening Western's state funding in the event they felt Western was 'circumventing' the State's recently passed Right-to-Work legislation."

It is a sad day when the Board of Trustees of a Constitutionally-autonomous university bows to such threat tactics, instead of fighting back like the Wayne State and University of Michigan boards have done. These were threats from individual legislators who do not have WMU's best interests at heart, and there has been no action taken by either house of the legislature. "Individual threats" come from corrupt and autocratic politicians and hardly represent the "will of the people." Furthermore, Proposition 2 refused to enshrine labor unions in the state constitution. In no way was it a vote to end unionization in the very state where the labor union movement took root.

Right to Work is temporary. Solidarity is Forever! Those of you who supported PIO by showing up in the hallways at the February 27 Board meeting proved this because this collective labor action encouraged the President and Board to change their mind. On March 20 the Board held a special meeting via telephone and unanimously approved the pending 3-year contract for the PIO. Together we did make a difference!

March  
2013

