

# *31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl*

## **Southern Fried Sawyer 2**

It was only a few months ago that EFIB Chair George Carter told the world that former EFIB economist, Charles Sawyer, is the king of reading recommendation letters for "unstated content." Now, with Sawyer's recent recommendation of protégé Akbar Marvasti's application for promotion to full, Sawyer is also the emperor of writing them. The connections between Sawyer and Marvasti almost know no end. They worked together in the same department at USM just last year (2006-07). Sawyer hired Marvasti from Pomona College in the spring of 2006. Sawyer knows the details of Marvasti's cross-country trek to California in order to avoid the conflicts he (Marvasti) was part of while on faculty, as a full professor no less, at the University of Houston -- Downtown. Now sources tell us that the two of them may have even been together at Louisiana State University in the early 1980s. One would think some of this would have made it into Sawyer's letter.

What Marvasti's P&T gambit says about his own reputation in academia is voluminous. Twenty three years, relatively few refereed publications in economics journals, and only a handful of citations (also in economics journals) to his credit. As was said on these pages recently, the fact that Marvasti took an \$80,000 per year job with the EFIB in 2006-07 after 22 years in academia says a lot. Sawyer's "external review letter" says even more. Now it appears as though the CoB is only "some more Akbars" away from the College it's trying to be.

The "Breaking News" story said that Sawyer often held himself up as a "gatekeeper of propriety" while in the CoB. We know better. He's the guy who banked \$12,000 last year teaching overloads to boost his PERS retirement benefits. He's also the guy who worked with Carter to secretly set up preferential summer pay deals for himself and Edward Nissan. He's also the guy who explained to CoB faculty that the "Black Tuesday" governance re-vote was but a means to a necessary end. He was a gatekeeper for sure, only the contents behind the proverbial gate have always been unstated.