

Hello friends and family,

I am emailing you to plead for your help. Wisconsin public schools, the University of Wisconsin University System, MATC, state prison guards, and all state, county and city workers need your help (with the exception of police officers and fire fighters).

I am begging you to please call our Governor, your state senator and your state representative TODAY to ask them not to vote on this extreme bill, that I explain below. [Follow this link for contact information.](#)

On Friday, Governor Scott Walker proposed a new budget repair bill that is nothing short of extreme. He is asking a law to be passed this week that will take away union bargaining rights and require all public workers to pay 5.6% of their salary into the pension and an additional 5%+ into our health insurance premiums. This will result in a 8-10% decrease in our paychecks next month.

In addition, he is asking the state lawmakers to pass a new law that will make union bargaining for anything other than salary illegal. This includes bargaining for sick days, vacation days, public school class sizes, health insurance benefits, maternity and paternity leaves and more benefits option will not be allowed. This leaves public workers with no ability to negotiate, and striking as the only option. This is not OK. Unions are not perfect but they have done many good things. We deserve a voice to negotiate.

I understand that times are tough for the state budget and we all need to take cuts. Public workers have made this cuts and we are willing to make reasonable cuts. Last year state workers were required to take nearly 8% pay cut in required furlough days. My teacher union bargained for a pay freeze without compensation for inflation, resulting in a 3% pay cut. However, Governor Walker's plan is extreme and unfair. We are all willing to negotiate for a fair compromise, but we are not given that choice.

Public workers in Wisconsin are the middle class. We are not overpaid. I have a Masters Degree and three years of experienced and I make \$39,000 a year. I do have a pension, yes. Similar to how those in the private sector have a 401K and their employers make contributions. Pensions are not free money and they are part of our benefit package. Just like our health insurance is part of our benefits package. We have good health insurance, yes. We deserve it. So do ALL citizens of Wisconsin and the United States. The answer is not to lower the bar of health insurance, but rather to raise it for all.

There are lies out there saying that public workers are overpaid and we are to blame for the state deficit. This is simply not true. [Read this report by the Economic Policy Institute](#) that explains how public workers actually make less than private workers. Some people believe we don't pay taxes. It's not true. We do pay taxes and as a large bulk of the middle class, our taxes paid on discretionary spending positively effects this state. We are will to tighten our belts, but this is extreme.

Governor Walkers says there is nothing to negotiate. The state has nothing to offer. It's important that you all, taxpayers of Wisconsin, know that the new state government has passed into [law three tax cuts bills since January 3](#), totaling a \$117 million dollars added to deficit. How can the state afford \$117 million in tax cuts, but is unwilling to even negotiate with public workers, the hard working middle class. Did you get a tax cut under Governor Walker? Do you deserve to take a 10% pay decrease?? Why do public workers?

This goes beyond the pay and benefits for public workers. This will affect public schools K-12 and post-secondary education. The quality of this education. Unions also negotiate for class size and program offerings. If you care at all about education in this state, please take action now.

Last but not least, Governor Walker has already talked with the National Guard, preparing them for action against any strikes. Is this the kind of government you want? Bullying with tanks, tear gas and machine guns if we don't accept his extreme ideas?? Take a stand NOW.

Please call your State Senator and State Legislator TODAY and ask him/her to vote NO on this extreme bill. Governor Walker is not a dictator and we cannot let him bully the public sector this way. Give public workers the chance to continue to negotiate fair and appropriate changes in benefits and pay. This will set a precedent for the next 3 years and 10 months of his term. Who will be the next scapegoat, what will be the next extreme?? Stand up WITH public workers.

[Follow this link to find your elected officials and make a phone call or send an email.](#) It will only take a few moments.

THANK YOU!

**In Germany they first came for the Communists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist.**

**Then they came for the Jews,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.**

**Then they came for the trade unionists,
and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist.**

**Then they came for the Catholics,
and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant.**

**Then they came for me —
and by that time no one was left to speak up.**

-Martin Niemoller