



Wisconsin Gov. to Obama: Butt Out

"I think we're focusing on balancing our budget," Walker said. "It would be wise for the President and others in Washington to focus on balancing their budget, which they are a long ways from doing." The *Washington Post* [reported](#) Friday that the President's "political machine" worked closely with state and national union officials to mobilize thousands of protesters to gather in Madison Thursday and to plan similar demonstrations in other state capitals. As Alex Newman [reported](#) at [TheNewAmerican.com](#), police estimated the number of protestors at the Wisconsin capital Thursday at about 25,000, many of whom are believed to have been bussed in from out of state.



"We're not going to be intimidated by people coming in from outside of Wisconsin trying to tell us what we need to do to balance our budget," Walker said. "The bottom line is, we got elected to do a job."

Nine arrests were made and Walker said on Thursday he might have to call out the National Guard to maintain order and keep certain government facilities, including the state prison, functioning, as some of the state employees had apparently walked off the job. Democratic legislators were also missing in action, having fled to Illinois to put off a vote on the governor's proposals.

The legislation Walker is pushing would prohibit pay increases for state employees that exceed the rise in the Consumer Price Index and would ban in state agencies the "union shop," whereby paying dues to a union is a requirement for employment. Many state employees would also be required to contribute more to their pension and health benefit plans. Walker is also pushing for cuts in overall state spending to deal with a deficit of \$136.7 million for the current fiscal year, according to a statement released from the governor's office earlier this month.

Obama said blame for the state's budget crisis should not be placed on the state workers. "I think it is very important for us to understand that public employees, they're our neighbors, they're our friends," the President said in an interview with a Wisconsin TV station. "These are folks who are teachers and they're firefighters and they're social workers and they're police officers."

Photo of Gov. Scott Walker: AP Images

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