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## News from Capitol Hill. . .

February 18, 2011

## ****WORKERS ARE UNDER ATTACK: STAND WITH EDUCATORS FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS!****

Workers across the nation are under attack as governors and state legislatures seek to decimate collective bargaining rights and slash pensions and health care benefits. Wisconsin Governor Walker wants to silence educator voices. He has refused to negotiate with educators, who have repeatedly, publicly stated their willingness to sacrifice for the good of the state and the future of their students. For educators, this fight is not about pay and benefits – it is about the right to be heard.

At the statehouse and online, public school supporters are sending a message that cannot be ignored. As tens of thousands march in solidarity in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, and Idaho, countless others prepare to fight in other states.

[Read the latest news](http://www.educationvotes.nea.org/) and learn how you can add your support for educators and other workers across the nation.

## ****TELL CONGRESS EDUCATION CUTS HURT STUDENTS AND THE COUNTRY!****

Cyberlobbyists – thank you for your incredible response to our calls to action. Together, you have sent over **40,000 e-mails** **to Members of Congress** in the past few weeks urging investment in education.

**The good news**: This week, President Obama released his budget proposal for the next fiscal year (FY 2012).  K-12 education receives one of the only significant funding increases in the President’s budget. Read [NEA’s response](http://www.nea.org/home/42440.htm) to the President’s Budget Proposal.

**The bad news:** The House of Representatives is expected to pass shortly a “continuing resolution” (CR) for the rest of the current fiscal year (FY 2011).  The draconian education cuts contained in the House CR would dash the dreams of countless American students, put additional strain on state budgets already cut to the bone, and stall the engine that drives our economy. Thousands of students would lose Title I services and Head Start slots; local tax burdens would increase as education costs are shifted to state and local levels; millions of students would lose Pell Grant assistance; and thousands of education jobs would be lost. [See](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Impact_of_House_FY11_CR_%28HR_1%29_on_ED__Selected_Programs.pdf) how much your state would lose.

But, the fight is not over! The Senate and the President will not support the House-passed CR. In fact, the President has already issued a veto threat should the bill come to his desk for signature. The House will have to negotiate with the Senate and the President in the coming weeks in order to craft a CR that can be enacted into law. **Your voice is critical as negotiations continue – particularly to tell the Senate to stand firm against the cuts.** Congress will be back at home next week for the congressional recess. Make sure they hear your voice.

**Take Action TODAY**:  [Tell Congress](http://capwiz.com/nea/issues/alert/?alertid=21730501) to reject education funding cuts and to invest in education for our nation’s future.

## ****CHEERS AND JEERS****

### Cheers to:

**Representatives Gwen Moore (D-WI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Ron Kind (D-WI)** for standing up for Wisconsin workers. All three issued strong public statements of support for public employees fighting the governor’s outrageous attacks and have been active in helping support and organize workers’ efforts.

* **Representative Baldwin:** “In Wisconsin, Governor Walker and Republicans in the legislature have launched an economic assault on those who teach our children, care for the sick and elderly, and maintain our roads.  They seek not only to impose financial hardship, but also to silence these workers and to deny them the opportunity to negotiate fair contracts..My team is working hard to help organize efforts to fight these unprecedented attacks on working families. [I am proud to stand with those speaking out](http://tammybaldwin.com/VideoGallery/VideoPlayer/TabId/161/VideoId/47/Our-Fight.aspx) in support of Wisconsin workers.”
* **Representative Moore**: “The Governor is cavalierly trying to eliminate rights that Wisconsin workers have historically fought and died for.  Public workers are not the enemy.  They are skilled and trained workers.  They are taxpayers, volunteers, neighbors, and friends.  They should be invited to the table and treated with respect – just like they have been historically by Republican and Democratic governors alike. Just like we do in Washington, leaders in Wisconsin need to make some tough budget decisions.  But eliminating the rights of our public workers is an attack on Wisconsin’s middle class.  It’s an attack on our state’s rich history.  And it’s a crushing blow to our working families who are struggling to climb out of this recession.”
* **Representative Kind:** Collective bargaining -- the chance for employees to negotiate for fair wages with management – is key to our state’s success. It is a time-tested, reasonable process.  And let’s be clear, public employees are not the reason state budgets are in trouble. We need to address the budget, but we can’t just fix it by cutting the salaries and robbing the retirement funds of our nurses, teachers, and public safety professionals.”

 **Representative George Miller (D-CA)** who spoke out strongly against proposed House cuts to programs that serve our most vulnerable populations. Representative Miller said on the House floor, “You want to do something tough? Take away tax breaks from the hedge fund managers that don’t’ deserve it.Make the oil companies pay the royalties that the taxpayers of this country are owed. That’s tough. You know why? Because they can fight back. Head Start parents don’t get to fight back very much....Poor children don’t get to fight back very much."  
  
 **Representatives Hirono (D-HI), Bishop (D-GA), and Andrews (D-NJ)** for standing up with educators at a press conference this week highlighting the devastating impacts that proposed education cuts will have on educators and the students they serve.

### Jeers to:

</STRONG**Governors Walker (R-WI) and Kasich (R-OH), lawmakers in Indiana, and Idaho School State Superintendent Luna.** They have attacked public education and workers and put forward ill-conceived proposals that will take education and our nation backward and stall economic recovery. These lawmakers want to take away educators’ voices so you won’t be able to speak up about school safety, class size, school conditions, the need for more counselors and nurses to serve students, and all the other areas where you have a right to be heard.