

Labor bill called tool to control budgets

Kasich says he's not anti-union

By Jim Provance

COLUMBUS -- Gov. John Kasich insisted on Friday that he's not anti-union and defended a bill moving through the General Assembly that would restrict public employees' collective bargaining rights.

He said the measure's goal is to give state and local governments the power to take back control of their own budgets, and he held up Toledo's current contract fight with trash and sewer workers as Exhibit A.

"Today, in [The Toledo Blade](#) you have the union telling the city we really don't care what your finances are, just give us the money," he said. "The mayor up there is in a dither. He's trying to figure out, 'Wait a minute. How am I supposed to manage my costs?' "

Days before he is scheduled to deliver his first State of the State address and less than two weeks before he'll present his first budget proposal, the GOP governor addressed the issue that has brought tens of thousands of protesters into the Statehouse.

"This is all designed to, No. 1, give local officials the tools they need; secondly, to strengthen the pension systems that we currently have, and allow us to save money," he said. "Mansfield is on the edge of bankruptcy. There's a report now that Mansfield may not make it through the year because they couldn't control their costs."

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