



[Michigan Becomes Latest State With Worker-Led Uprising](#)

By: [David Dayen](#) Wednesday March 16, 2011 11:36 am

The team at [MichaelMoore.com](#) is streaming live video all day long from protests in Lansing, the latest site to see a backlash to Republican-led efforts to weaken the rights of workers. Moore says that [over 6,000 protesters occupied the Rotunda](#) in the Capitol as of an hour ago. About a thousand [stayed overnight](#) last night.

Marcy is closer to this situation, but as I understand it, the protests are not solely over the “emergency financial managers” position. For instance, [1,000 seniors rallied](#) yesterday in Lansing specifically over Gov. Rick Snyder’s plan to tax pensions. Indeed, it’s Snyder’s [proposed budget](#) that represents a true reverse-Robin Hood stance:

Gov. Rick Snyder (R-MI) [has proposed](#) ending his state’s Earned Income Tax Credit, cutting a \$600 per child tax credit, and reducing credits for seniors, while also cutting funding for school districts [by eight to ten percent](#). At the same time, as the Michigan League for Human Services found, the state’s business taxes would be [reduced by nearly \\$2 billion, or 86 percent](#), under Snyder’s plan:

Business taxes would be cut by 86 percent from an estimated \$2.1 billion in FY 2011 to \$292.7 million in FY 2013, the first full year of the proposed tax changes... Taxes on individuals from the state income tax would rise by \$1.7 billion or nearly 31 percent, from an estimated \$5.75 billion in FY 2011 to \$7.5 billion in FY 2013, the first full year of the tax changes.

As the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy found, the practical upshot of Snyder’s tax increases is to place even more of a burden on Michigan’s poorest residents, [who will see a bigger hike](#) than those at the upper end of the income scale.

People aren’t appreciating the role of corporate tax cuts in all the plans of these right-wing governors. They are exacerbating their states’ budget problems and then sticking the elderly, poor and infirm with the bill, along with the unions. As one senior said yesterday, “It’s about our governor taking our money and giving it to big business.”

Incidentally, when he was elected, Rick Snyder was seen as the most moderate of the Republican governors ushered in last year.

That’s not to minimize the emergency financial managers provision, which has [already passed both chambers](#) of the Legislature and is awaiting the Governor’s signature. The

bill would allow the Governor to appoint emergency financial managers with expanded powers (there were already EFMs in Michigan), who could terminate union contracts, fire local officials and even dissolve entire local governments. An earlier version, which allowed the EFM to be a corporation, was dropped. Still, this looks to be a total assault on the entire concept of democracy. Even supporters [call it “financial martial law.”](#)

Despite the smaller crowds for the protests, Rick Snyder has [seen his approval ratings drop](#) markedly as the news of his budget and his financial martial law plan has been disseminated. And taxing pensions proves to be an unpopular idea, opposed 53-41.

We’ve seen this across the Midwest, where Republican Governors making power grabs have become instantly unpopular. It’s particularly true in Ohio, where John Kasich would [get beat by 15 points](#) if an election were held today against his opponent from November, Ted Strickland. This is having a [drafting effect](#) on other statewide races, as Sherrod Brown now looks comfortably ahead for re-election. In this case, Brown, a strong supporter of unions, actually deserves the support.

The youth-labor wave continues...