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35,000 People Protest Christie's Budget Cuts At Trenton Statehouse, Outnumbering Earlier Tea Party Rally 87-to-1

By [Zaid Jilani](#) on May 24th, 2010 at 4:05 pm

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Teachers protesting against Christie's cuts.

As the poor economy continues to take a toll on the nation's tax coffers, states across the country are [facing serious budget crises](#). One such state is New Jersey, which has a projected [\\$10.7 billion](#) budget deficit. To deal with the budget deficit, progressive state legislators passed legislation creating a new tax bracket on residents [making more than \\$1 million](#). The state's nonpartisan Office of Legislative Services estimates that the new tax would lead a household making \$1.2 million annually to pay [only \\$11,598](#) more a year.

Yet New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie (R) [vetoed](#) the progressive legislators' tax bill, despite the fact that the state has the "[second-highest personal income in the country](#)." Instead, the governor has proposed massive cuts to public services, like an [\\$820 million](#) reduction in the state's education budget and [ending millions of dollars of aid](#) to cash-strapped municipalities.

Saturday, New Jerseyans, outraged at Christie's choice to protect the wealthiest citizens of his state rather than its schools and infrastructure, demonstrated outside the statehouse in Trenton, chanting, "We are not the problem." Police estimated that [35,000 people](#) took part in what quickly turned into "one of the largest protests ever in the state."

Local news station FOX 29 filed a report from the scene. Watch it:



While the protests took place, Christie was 54 miles away at a bill signing at Monmouth Park racetrack. When asked about the protesters, the governor simply dismissed them, saying, “I’m here. They’re there. [Have a nice day.](#)” “How ’bout some jobs, Governor Christie?” one woman reportedly yelled at Christie during his appearance at the track.

The massive rally is particularly significant when compared to the right-wing tea party protests, which the media [have covered obsessively](#). At a tea party rally in Trenton last month where demonstrators gathered to protest “unchecked” government, police estimated that, at a maximum, [only 400 people](#) attended. Which means that at the very least, the protesters marching against Christie’s budget cuts and for decent investment in public infrastructure outnumbered the anti-government tea party protesters 87-to-1.

Update Blue Jersey has more coverage of the protests [here](#).

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