

GOVERNOR WANTS PARTS OF DISPUTED UNION BILL PLACED IN STATE BUDGET

Debate over a new state law that restricts public employee unions took a new twist Tuesday when [Gov. John Kasich](#) said he wanted to insert parts of it related to teachers into the pending state budget.

Inclusion of the language in the budget could prevent a referendum such as the one opponents of the collective bargaining statute want to conduct at the Nov. 8 election.

However, the Ohio Supreme Court previously held that a provision in the current budget authorizing installation of video slot machines at horse racetracks was subject to a public vote, although the repeal effort ultimately was dropped.

Mr. Kasich told reporters Tuesday that he wanted to incorporate into the budget ([HB 153](#)) "the criteria to reward teachers for good effort," apparently referring to a section of the public employee collective bargaining law ([SB 5](#)) dealing with performance-based pay for educators.

"That wording that's in five, there'll be some part of it put into the budget. I'm not exactly sure ... how all that language will play, but I'm very concerned about getting that going, so that schools have an opportunity to develop criteria for assessing good performance," the governor said.

Gov. Kasich

A labor-led coalition known as "We Are Ohio" is preparing to conduct a petition drive in an attempt to repeal the union bill, which affects about 360,000 state, public university, and local government employees, in the fall election.

Gov. Kasich was optimistic the law would withstand a challenge at the polls.

"I'm very confident that when the voters find out all the details of this that this law will be maintained. Period. That's the end of it. There'll obviously be a robust effort to defend it, and to support it, and that's really all I have to say about it today," he said.

Later on Tuesday, House [Speaker Bill Batchelder](#) (R-Medina) indicated the addition of language to the budget to back up the bargaining law in the event of a referendum was under consideration.

"These things happen," he said.

"I don't want to make a guesstimate about it at this point but there are number of things, however, that we are looking at - that being one," Rep. Batchelder said.

"But we also have a really serious problem in the retirement (systems) and that obviously has economic and cash flow ramifications, so that is something we should look at in the context of the budget," he said.

The We Are Ohio campaign said it would not second-guess what Gov. Kasich was going to do.

"We will address the situation and move forward to protect Ohio's working families. We are all in on this effort to ensure workers' rights and workers' safety are protected," said Dennis Willard, the coalition spokesman.

The budget bill already contains provisions dealing with performance-based pay for teachers, and performance evaluations, that reflect the approach of the bargaining law.

Mr. Kasich's proposed two-year budget would eliminate salary schedules and steps in place for

teachers, and instead require them to receive performance based pay. It would require a school board to measure a teacher's performance based on four factors.

The budget bill would require each board of education to annually adopt a teachers' salary schedule with a minimum and maximum salary for categories based on licensure status.

Teacher salary provisions in the budget would prevail over any conflicting provisions of a collective bargaining agreement.