

# Opinion: Brown, labor have a chance to be a model

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Gov. Jerry Brown offered a quick answer to the question of whether he would follow the incendiary lead of Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker by moving to abolish collective bargaining rights for state workers.

"No," Brown told reporters the other day.

Walker and other newly elected and emboldened Republican governors are using their state's fiscal crises as an excuse to curtail or abolish public employee unions. This spectacle will embitter both sides, particularly the rank-and-file, and that's never a good idea.

If Republican Meg Whitman had won in November, and sought to carry out her campaign promise of dismissing 40,000 state workers, California might well have been the scene of such angry protests.

Brown, by contrast, signed the original legislation during his first stint as governor granting state workers the right to collective bargaining.

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