

Fletcher says protesters were from out of state

By Robert Schoenberger
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The Courier-Journal

Gov. Ernie Fletcher does not believe that the nearly 2,000 people who crowded the Capitol Rotunda Tuesday to oppose his labor legislation are from Kentucky.

"You've got people that are shipped in from out of state that are opposed to it," Fletcher said of protesters at the union rally against right-to-work and prevailing-wage bills he supports.

The governor made the remarks late Tuesday at a press conference following his budget address. He later added, "You can ship people in for anything. Those are not our constituents."

Yesterday, Fletcher's spokeswoman, Jodi Whittaker, reiterated

another of his statements — that the buses carrying protesters to Frankfort did not have Kentucky plates.

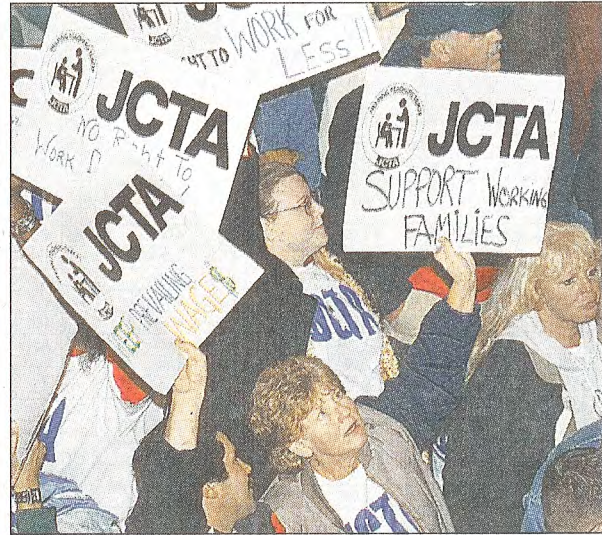
Union leaders called Fletcher's assertions ridiculous.

Bill Londrigan, Kentucky AFL-CIO president, said he collected forms from 900 Kentucky union members at the rally, all with a name and address. He estimated 1,800 people attended, all from Kentucky.

"It really shows how out of touch this governor is that he can't even recognize the citizens of the commonwealth," he said.

Rocky Comito, president of United Auto Workers Local 862 in Louisville, said more than 100 from his union went. The Teamsters Louisville local also sent a large group.

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By Sam Upshaw Jr., The Courier-Journal

Protesters crowded the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort before Gov. Ernie Fletcher's budget address Tuesday.