

Are Jerry Brown and Arnold Schwarzenegger "budget 'Twins'?"

Sacramento -- Guv Jerry Brown's budget was, he admitted, "painful." And a lot of the folks protesting outside the Capitol afterwards felt so, too.

Many said some of the social safety net cuts proposed Monday looked a lot like the ones former Guv Arnold Schwarzenegger used to float. This sign, held by Tasha Guzman, 37, of Hayward, expressed what some of Brown's longtime supporters were saying: Here's our story about how Brown's union and other supporters feel about his budget slashes.



Joe Garofoli/San Francisco Chronicle

Tasha Guzman, of Hayward, standing outside the Capitol in Sacramento Monday

Not true, Brown senior adviser Tom Quinn told me a few strides from where Guzman was standing. Brown's cuts, though painful, were more surgical. Arnold's, he said, "were like a meat ax."

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The difference between the safety-net cuts proposed by former [GOP](#) Gov. [Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) and those offered Monday by Democratic Gov. [Jerry Brown](#) can be seen through the eyes of Lucy Beltran.

The 67-year-old home health care worker estimated she would lose 20 percent of her monthly salary if Brown's budget passed. Still, she and others maintain hope that this governor will listen to their pleas to reconsider.

Many of them voted for Brown, or belong to unions that propelled Brown to victory last fall. They're mad and frustrated, and the cuts could put them on the street. But they're not as mad - yet - as they were when Schwarzenegger proposed similar cuts.

Beltran took the job to feed, bathe and dress 37-year-old Kelly Alameida because she couldn't live off her retirement benefits earned from 30 years as a caregiver. She needs the \$700 a month she receives from the state program to buy groceries.

If it disappears, she said it would be "devastating" - for both her and Alameida, who uses a wheelchair.

"[Jerry Brown](#) is on our side," said Beltran, a Democrat and union member from Rocklin ([Placer County](#)) who voted for him. "He promised to help us."

As Brown spends the coming months lobbying for the \$12.5 billion in cuts he proposed Monday - and for a package of tax extensions he would like to place on the June ballot - he's going to have to trust that the small reservoir of support among his backers doesn't evaporate.

Outside the Capitol on Monday, Tasha Guzman held a sign parody of Schwarzenegger's movie "Twins" - a comedy about the buff Schwarzenegger and his pint-sized co-star [Danny DeVito](#). On Guzman's sign, Brown's head was superimposed on DeVito's body under the phrase "State Budget Twins."

Guzman, 37, is from Hayward and is worried about proposed cuts to subsidized child care. That's what allows her to look for work while her 6-year-old child is in after-school care. Similar child care subsidies enabled her to work for 15 years as a manager at fast-food restaurants when her 16-year-old son was younger.

Many of the labor leaders who were instrumental in Brown's victory over Republican [Meg Whitman](#) in November only lightly chided the governor for his budget-balancing proposals Monday.

"While we support the governor's approach," said David Kieffer, executive director of the [Service Employees International Union](#) California, "it's far from perfect."

[Art Pulaski](#), secretary-treasurer of the California Labor Federation, used almost the same wording, saying "while Gov. Brown's proposal isn't perfect, it at least strikes a much-needed balance between cuts and revenues."

Some Republicans felt a bit of political joy over the possibility of watching Brown at odds with the Democrat-controlled Legislature and some of his key supporters.

"For the next few months," said Mark Standriff, a spokesman for the California Republican Party, "this will be a Democratic battle of '[Family Feud](#)' of epic proportions."

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