

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

## **No surprise**

### ***Gov. John Kasich's first 100 days set course for eventful term***

<http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2011/04/19/no-surprise.html?sid=101>

John Kasich marked his first 100 days in office last week, a gubernatorial milestone that, in his case, does not end a political honeymoon.

The differences - with unions and Democrats, especially - started before he took office.

Those who voted for Kasich and now say they're angry must not have paid attention to his campaign. Kasich was not coy. He has done as he said he would.

He'd promised to make the tough calls, and said one term was fine with him: "I just want to fix the state and get the heck out of this as soon as I can."

Ohio's economic problems are deeply rooted, the result of years of bad management and dithering. The coming days will continue to be painful and productive.

Kasich and the Republican-controlled Statehouse have accomplished more in these 100 days than the last lot pretty much did in all of 2010. Work has focused largely on creating jobs and cleaning up the state's fiscal mess.

Kasich killed the expensive 3C commuter train, restored two snow days to school districts, passed the JobsOhio program to privatize development efforts, and ushered in an initiative to remove regulatory obstacles for businesses.

The most controversial issue on his agenda, however, remains Senate Bill 5. Opponents say it guts collective bargaining. But Kasich argues it provides school boards and municipalities the tools they need to absorb state budget cuts. Unless governments regain control over employee expenses, local taxpayers will continue to pay for salary and benefit programs that far exceed those available in the private sector.

A referendum aiming to overturn the law looms for November. Ohio may well become the battleground state for public-employee unions.

Kasich, however, had little choice other than to step on toes. He arrived facing an

\$8 billion state budget deficit. His goals are to restructure government and do so without concessions to special interests.

Days after winning last November's election, he told lobbyists: "If you're not on the bus, we will run over you with the bus. And I'm not kidding."

It's clear now that he meant what he said.

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