

Pennsylvania's half budget, same sex-marriage in Arkansas and Illinois opposes cost of Obama presidential library – US state blog round up for 10 – 16 May

USApp Managing Editor, **Chris Gilson**, looks at the week in U.S. state blogging. [Click here](#) for our weekly roundup of national blogs.

Northeast

In New York City this week, *The Lonely Conservative* writes that the mayor, Bill de Blasio, 'didn't waste any time' in paying back his 'union buddies'. They [write](#) that under the previous mayor, Michael Bloomberg, the teachers' unions refused to negotiate a contract, but have now agreed with one with the City, that would see an 8 percent retroactive raise, and a 10 percent increase through to 2018.



Moving south to New Jersey, *PolitickerNJ* [reports](#) on Wednesday that Ras Baraka has claimed victory in the Newark mayor's race, beating fellow Democrat Shavar Jeffries. Staying in the Garden State, *The Feed* [says](#) that the embattled Governor, Chris Christie, has more to worry about with the news that the state has had its sixth credit downgrade in four years, with Moody's lowering its rating to A1. They say that while Christie has put through financial reforms already, many more are needed, but the state's Democratic legislature is not willing to go along with Christie's narrative that more cuts are needed.

On Tuesday, *The Political Carnival* [reports](#) that the Vermont Statehouse has approved a bill that would raise the minimum wage in the state to \$10.50 an hour over the next four years. They say that the state's Tea Party threatened to torpedo the bill if the four year step up period was not included, but Democrats retailed by raising the rate from \$10.10 to \$10.50.

In the Granite State of New Hampshire, former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown made a 'peculiar' appearance at a candidate forum, writes *Daily Kos*. They say that Brown appeared at the back of the room at a GOP forum for a few minutes, even though he had declined the invite. They say that this behavior may be further evidence that his campaign for the Senate in New Hampshire is not serious, especially given accusations that he is a carpetbagger.

In Pennsylvania this week, *Keystone Politics* [reports](#) that the state's Republicans have only passed 'half a budget', due to their strong desire for tax cuts which has meant slashing public funding for education and local governments. They say that it will be for the incoming Democratic Governor in 2015 to sort out, and then take the blame for the budget mess.

South

Late last week saw a judge in Arkansas strike down the state's 2004 constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. *Daily Kos* [writes](#) on Monday that the state's Attorney General, Dustin McDaniel has vowed to appeal to the high court against the ruling, though marriage licenses have already been issued this week.

In Florida this week, *National Journal* [previews](#) what they say is the 'most botched House race of 2014'. They write that the Democratic candidate for the state's 13th Congressional District, Ed Jany, surprisingly dropped out of the race after only being selected at the last minute on the filing deadline day. The party had unsuccessfully tried to woo Alex Sink, who lost the seat race to Republican David Jolly in a special

election in March. Staying in the Sunshine State, *SaintPetersblog* [writes](#) on Monday that the Democratic Party is counting on three women to 'knock out a few GOP men' in Congressional Districts this fall, one of whom is standing in Florida.



Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana credit: Gage Skidmore (Creative Commons BY SA)

Moving to the Pelican State, *Louisiana Voice* [writes](#) that the administration of Governor Bobby Jindal is 'spiraling out of control' with 'absurd' recommendations from consultants that have been paid \$5 million to find \$500 million in cuts. They write that the consultants' report only finds \$74 million in cuts, including ideas like cutting back the hours of operation of a ferry, decreasing road asphalt thickness and circling employment ads for prison inmates.

According to North Carolina's *The Progressive Pulse*, the Old North State is the [country's most gerrymandered](#). They write that the state GOP's redistricting efforts have paid off, with Democrats only holding four seats, despite winning a vote share worth seven.

Midwest

On Monday, *Wonkblog* [covers](#) auctions of homes by the Detroit Land Bank Authority, which start as low as \$1,000. They say that in order to attract neighbors, not investors, such homes are only sold to Michigan residents and businesses, and buyers must show an executed contract to make the homes habitable within thirty days. Staying in the Great Lakes State, *eclecta blog* [writes](#) on Thursday that the Michigan GOP's efforts to kill a citizen's initiated referendum on the minimum wage being raised to \$10.10 in November is a 'disgusting' attempt to override the will of voters.

National Review's The Campaign spot [reports](#) that in Illinois, 67 percent of people are opposed to spending \$100 million on Barack Obama's presidential library and museum, according to a new poll.

Moving on to the North Star State, *Hit & Run* [writes](#) on Minnesota's continuing debate over medical marijuana. They say that the state Senate and House passed different medical marijuana bills, with the Governor, Mark Dayton, prepared to sign the more restrictive House bill.

In North Dakota this week, *SayAnythingBlog* [writes](#) that two of the state's counties were counted as their own state in terms of oil production; they'd be counted as second leading oil producing state in the U.S. They say with so much oil being produced in such a small area, it is no wonder that the state has struggled with infrastructure and population growth.

Finally, in the Badger State, *Uppity Wisconsin* [reports](#) that the wife of the judge that killed the John Doe investigation into Governor Scott Walker's recall campaign last week is in fact a frequent contributor to Walker.

West and Pacific

On Wednesday, California's *Capital and Main* [looks](#) at the story of how a backroom deal between eight Democrats and corporations helped to defeat a state House bill that would stop employers from cutting their full-time workers' hours to part-time in order to avoid providing them with health insurance under Obamacare.

Moving to Colorado, *ColoradoPols* [writes](#) that the Centennial State's legislature has ramped up corporate welfare in 2014 at the same time as it now seeks to shift its accumulated debt on unpaid state public pensions, and impose 'market risk' on them.

In Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [reports](#) that on Thursday, the a U.S. Appeals Court issued a stay on an earlier overturning of the Gem State's ban on same-sex marriages. The state filed emergency motions seeking a delay while they appealed the ruling, otherwise same-sex marriage licenses would have been issued from Friday morning.

In Washington State, the city of Seattle recently moved to raise its minimum wage to \$15 in the coming years. *National Review's The Agenda* [wrote](#) on Friday that while many suburbanites may benefit from the rise, these better-trained and/or more highly motivated suburbanites may well displace their low-wage counterparts currently residing in Seattle.

Moving up to Alaska, *The Mudflats* writes on Monday that while House Bill 77, which removed protections for resources, was recently killed, it is likely to rise again next year under another name. They [say](#) that the bill would have allowed 'activities that are harmful to fisheries, wildlife, lands and waters ... with few findings and no public input'.

Finally, in the Aloha state of Hawaii, *Honolulu Civil Beat* [ponders](#) whether or not the Hawaiian Kingdom still exists as the head of the state's Office of Hawaiian Affairs recently wrote to the Secretary of State, John Kerry, to clarify the issue.

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Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of USApp– American Politics and Policy, nor of the London School of Economics.

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