

Southern primaries, ‘monied nihilists’ in Michigan, and Nevada scraps Obamacare exchange – US state blog round up for 17 – 23 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 Massachusetts, *MassPoliticsProfs* [looks](#) at recent efforts in the state to repeal its casino gambling law. They say that a referendum on the issue has been bogged down by the state Attorney General’s appeal that if the referendum passed it would constitute an ‘unconstitutional taking’, with exiting casino’s losing their investments without compensation.

Green Mountain Daily is [sad](#) in Vermont this week because with the announcement that Bruce Lisman will not be running for Governor, means the state’s Republican Party is now facing an existential crisis. They write that no candidate is running for statewide office, other than Lieutenant Governor, and the Tea Partier Mark Donka is dragging down the state’s Congressional ticket.

Moving south to Connecticut *My Left Nutmeg* [says](#) that while the state does not have a governor that supports fair funding of public schools, at least they are not Rhode Island, where the Supreme Court recently rejected equality of school funding so that all schools can meet state standards.

In New York this week, *Daily Kos* [reports](#) that a recent poll shows that Governor Andrew Cuomo has lost a significant amount of support from the left, and would only win 39 percent of the vote in a three way race for the Governorship. Tellingly, in a three-way race Cuomo would only get 55 percent of the Democratic vote.

Moving over to the Garden State of New Jersey, *PolitickerNJ* [writes](#) that a GOP state lawmaker has accused Governor Chris Christie of being a ‘Woodrow Wilson’ progressive. They say that State Senator Michael Doherty was responding to Christie’s recent speech calling for the U.S. to take a more active role in world affairs.

In Pennsylvania this week, *Hit & Run* [reports](#) that a police Assistant Chief in Alleghany charged a local man with desecration and insults after he displayed an upside down American flag that had been spray-painted. They say that the notion that offensiveness is something that the police should get involved with is ‘ridiculous’.

Staying in the Keystone State, *Daily Kos* [reports](#)

that a judge has struck down the state’s ban on gay marriage. They say that it is a ‘fun fact’ that the Judge who struck down the ban was backed by then Senator Rick Santorum.



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (Credit; Pat Arnow) Creative Commons BY SA

South

On Tuesday, *National Journal* [covers](#) Democrat Michelle Nunn's chances for winning a Senate seat in Georgia. They say that her best chances were if Paul Broun or Phil Gingrey won the GOP primary this week, but instead David Perdue and Representative Jack Kingston now face a runoff primary in July. Nunn must now prove that her campaign was not depending on the Republicans 'screwing up' another race with a far right candidate. On Friday, *Outside the Beltway* [reports](#) that a new poll has Nunn leading Perdue and Kingston by three and six percent of the vote, respectively. Still in Georgia, *Daily Kos* [points](#) out that David Perdue's reputation is tarnished by the fact that when he was the CEO of Dollar General, he oversaw discriminatory pay practices where women managers were paid less than men, leading to a class action lawsuit which cost his company more than \$15 million.

In the Old Dominion State on Saturday, *Blue Virginia* [looks](#) at the latest battle in the state GOP's 'ongoing civil war'. They say that the Republican Party's establishment candidate, Jon Berkley was elected as the state's 5th District Party Chair, while the Tea Party candidate, Mark Lloyd was defeated.

In other GOP southern primary news this week, *National Journal* [says](#) that Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell is no longer the 'King of Kentucky'. They write that although he was expected to easily dispatch his primary rival on Tuesday, the campaign has illustrated that he is no longer the force that he once was. The state's Republican Party is slowly moving away from McConnell's style of Republicanism towards that of fellow Senator, Rand Paul.

In Alabama this week, an ad company was forced to take down a southern secession billboard, [writes](#) *The Political Carnival*. They say that 85 complaints were received against the billboard, which had been paid for by the Confederate League of the South.

On Saturday, Florida's *SaintPetersBlog* [writes](#) that the Sunshine State's beer and liquor wholesalers have provided as much as \$1.2 million to state office candidates since 2008, and nearly \$2 million to Florida's political parties.

Moving to Texas, *The Political Carnival* [says](#) that Governor Greg Abbott has refused Democrat Wendy Davis' recent offer for a series of gubernatorial debates because he is scared of Davis.

Midwest

In Indiana this week, *The Foundry* [says](#) that the Governor of the Hoosier State, Mike Pence, has defended his decision to ask that federal approval expand Medicaid coverage to 350,000 residents, up from 40,000. They say that Pence has said that the expansion will not be funded by new state spending or taxes, but that conservatives have pushed back saying that the proposal depends on new federal funds that makes Indiana vulnerable.



Credit: Sam Beebe, Ecotrust (Creative Commons BY)

On Tuesday, *Michigan Liberal* writes that ‘monied nihilists’ (in the form of the Americans for Prosperity conservative pressure group) in the Great Lakes State are seeking to prevent a proposed settlement on Detroit’s ongoing bankruptcy case. They [say](#) that conservative groups have an ‘animus’ against the city of Detroit, stating that the resources would be better devoted to other parts of the state.

Moving to Wisconsin, *Political Heat* [reflects](#) on the latest job data from the Badger State on Monday, writing that Governor Scott Walker’s administration appears to have concealed the fact that 2013 was the worst performing year in terms of job growth since Walker took office in 2011. They also say that the very small drop in unemployment that has occurred is likely to be related to long-term unemployment benefits being stripped from workers (meaning that they no longer qualify as unemployed, rather than anything that Walker has done). Still in Wisconsin, *Blue Cheddar* [writes](#) on Thursday that the state’s school voucher program cost \$3.2 million this year, and will more than double to \$7.3 million in the next school year. They say that the voucher program is something of a subsidy, as many of the eligible applicants were already in private school.

In Illinois this week, *Progress Illinois* [writes](#) that a new report has predicted that with climate change continuing, the Prairie state could be experiencing Texas-like summers in the coming decades.

Moving west to North Dakota, on Wednesday, *SayAnythingBlog* [writes](#) that the state’s legacy fund, which is derived from the state putting aside 30 percent of oil and extraction tax revenues, has just crossed the \$2 billion mark. Moving down to South Dakota, *Madville Times* writes that GOP Governor Dennis Daugaard has ‘spotted his opponents five points’. They [say](#) that in 2010 he promised that he would not introduce new taxes as Governor, but that now, he now supports raising gas taxes in the Mount Rushmore State.

West and Pacific

On Saturday, *FreakOutNation* [reports](#) that Utah GOP lawmaker, Paul Ray, has called for the introduction of firing squads for executions. His calls come in the wake of many states’ increasing difficulties in procuring drugs for lethal injections.

Moving to Montana, *Daily Kos* writes that the Republican frontrunner for the Senate, Steve Daines, [supports](#) teaching creationism in schools, according to an interview he gave in 2012.

Monday sees *Hit & Run* report that a judge has struck down a ban on same-sex marriage recognition in another state – this time in Oregon. They [say](#) that government officials in the Beaver State are not going to appeal the rulings, meaning that same-sex marriage is there to stay.

Meanwhile, in Arkansas, *Daily Kos* [reports](#) on the case of Republican Congressman Asa Hutchinson, a strong proponent of the state’s Voter ID law, was turned away from the polls this week, because he did not have proper ID under the law.

In Nevada this week, state officials have decided to scrap the Silver State’s Obamacare exchange, and have decided to join the federally run exchange system, [writes](#) *Hit & Run*. The decision comes after a report from Deloitte that found ‘1,500 defects’ with the \$75 million Xerox created system.

In the Grand Canyon State, *Blog for Arizona* [writes](#) on Monday that the latest voting data shows that Arizonans get the government they don’t vote for. They say that while turnout at the last election was over 74%, there are more than 2.6 million people in Arizona who are not registered to vote, or did not vote at all.

Honolulu Civil Beat [looks](#) at a new report out this week that has the Aloha State topping the country for pedestrian fatalities for those 65 and older. They say that the biggest factor may be Hawaii’s warm weather, meaning that more people, particularly seniors are likely to be walking, and thus more exposed to traffic.

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