

Texas' Rick Perry indicted, Missouri gun sales spike after riots, and will the Dude Abide in Montana's Senate race? - US state blog round up for 9 – 15 August

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

Northeast

At both national and state level in the U.S., many have noted the rise in popularity of the Libertarian Party, which some see as an alternative to the Republican Party. In Vermont this week, *VTDigger* [writes](#) that the views of the Libertarian Party are too extreme for the Green Mountain state, and that while many of the party's policies may seem attractive, others are reckless, such as its position of calling for an amnesty on non-violent drug dealers, and would have the potential to harm Vermont's communities.

Heading over to Connecticut, *My Left Nutmeg* [writes](#) on Monday that sexism and white supremacy have raised their ugly heads in the state. They say that the husband of a local Democratic probate judge candidate is a white supremacist, and that it is made worse by the local media's refusal to cover the primary election, as a local reporter had called it a "beauty contest based on personality", based on the fact that two women are in the running.

In the Empire State this week, *State of Politics* [writes](#) that Governor Andrew Cuomo's poll ratings have taken a hit ahead of November's general election. They say that Cuomo's lead over Republican Rob Astorino has narrowed from 37 to 32 percentage points, but that this is more likely to be due to how voters feel about the state's job situation, rather than Cuomo's machinations over the Moreland Commission on corruption. Staying in New York, the *Brennan Centre for Justice* [writes](#) on Friday that Cuomo has repeatedly ignored calls for a debate with Rob Astorino, and his Democratic primary challenger, Zephyr Teachout.

Moving down to the Garden State, *Save Jersey* [writes](#) that the state's gun laws are draconian and scary, after a mother from Philadelphia, Shaneen Allen, entered the state last year with a legal handgun in her possession. They say that the woman was pulled over in traffic, announced that she had a gun, and was arrested. She is now facing at least three years in prison if found guilty.

In two years' time one lucky city will be hosting the Democratic National Convention (DNC) to nominate the party's candidate for the presidency. On Sunday, *PoliticsPA* [reports](#) that Philadelphia's city leaders are making the case for the city to host the DNC, having already raised \$1 million in their bid.

South

This week, *Blue Virginia* [writes](#) that a new study has shown that the state is to 'throw away' more than \$21 billion



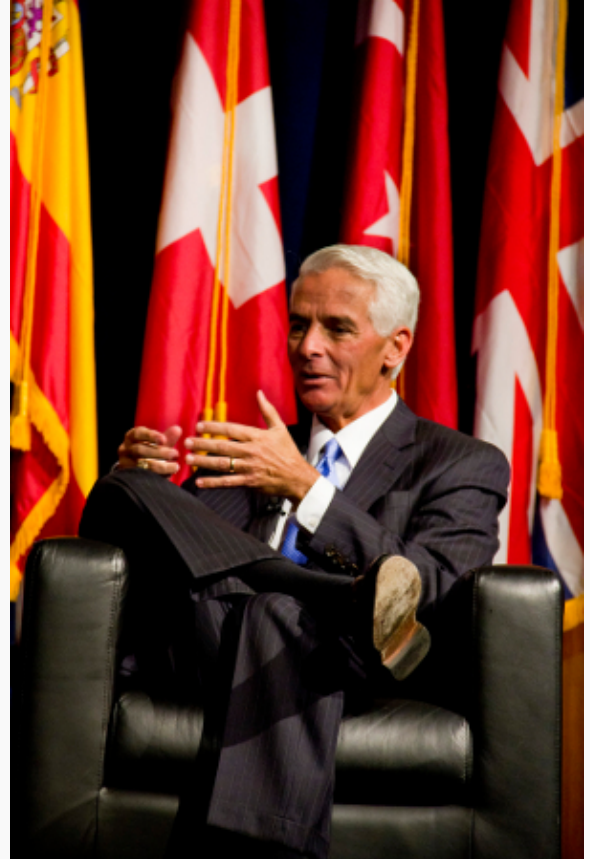
in Medicaid money and hospital reimbursements because the state legislature rejected the federal Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act.

On Wednesday, *Peach Pundit* [considers](#) whether or not the state should change the way that primary elections are currently run in favor of 'jungle primaries', which would be a primary where all candidates for elected office run regardless of political party, with the top two proceeding to a runoff election. They say that while other states have adopted this form of primary with some degree of success, there is a danger if one party fields a large number of candidates and splits the vote, leading to two candidates from the same party proceeding to the runoff.

Meanwhile in Florida, opponents of Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Charlie Crist have been questioning his conversion from the Republican Party. They [say](#) that Crist, who was previously the GOP Governor of Florida from 2007 to 2011, is facing allegations that his politics are governed by his own personal ambition and that he changes his positions to fit which way the political winds are blowing.

Heading west to Louisiana, *Something Like the Truth* [writes](#) on Friday that under GOP Governor, Bobby Jindal, the state's culture of corruption has remained the same, after he, along with the legislature 'shoveled' an extra \$30,000 in annual retirement benefits to the head of the state police.

It was not a good week for Texas Republican Governor, Rick Perry. On Thursday, *Burnt Orange Report* [writes](#) that in deciding to deploy troops to the U.S.-Mexico border recently, Perry bypassed the approval of the Texas state legislature, which is exactly the sort of action that Perry has been attacking Obama for recently. Late on Friday, *PoliticusUSA* [reports](#) that Perry has been indicted by a grand jury for abuse of power. They say that Perry is facing charges over his alleged efforts to force a county District Attorney to resign by threatening to withdraw state funding to the Public Integrity Unit run by the DA's office. If convicted, Perry could face a maximum of 109 years in prison.



Former Governor of Florida, Charlie Crist Credit: Neon Tpmmy (Creative Commons BY SA)

Midwest

On Saturday, Ohio's *Plunderbund* [writes](#) that the state has lost more than 4,500 state union jobs since Governor John Kasich took office in 2011. They say that nearly half were in corrections and prison related positions, which may be making the state's prisons less safe.

Heading west, *Eclectablog* [writes](#) that another benefit to Michigan of accepting the federal government's Medicaid expansion is that it will also help to improve the health of current and former prison inmates. They say that the investment in prisoners' health makes sense, as studies have shown that prisoners who are released with untreated health conditions are more likely to end up back in prison.

In Wisconsin, incumbent GOP Governor, Scott Walker, is in a relatively close race with Democrat, Mary Burke. On Saturday, *Political Heat* [writes](#) that Walker has tried to blame the 133,000 jobs lost in the state on the previous Governor, Jim Doyle, and his Commerce Secretary at the time: Mary Burke. They say that placing the blame on Burke ignores the economic realities at the time, as the country was experiencing the greatest economic crash since the Great Depression.

Missouri was in the national headlines all this week, after police in Ferguson, a suburb of St. Louis, shot dead Michael Brown, a black 17-year old who was unarmed. The week saw protests and riots in the town for most of the week. On Monday, *PoliticoMO* [writes](#) that Democratic Governor has called for a Justice Department

investigation into Brown's shooting. On Wednesday, *Crooks & Liars* [reports](#) that gun sales have increased by 50 percent near to Ferguson as people 'hunker down' during the riots. On Thursday, *Daily Kos* [writes](#) that much of the problems that have faced the St. Louis suburb this week are down to the incompetency of the local police force, and that their Iraq-era military gear has helped protestors to see them as an occupying force. On Friday, *Hit & Run* writes that Missouri's standard for the use of deadly force whilst making an arrest is 'absurdly lax'. They [say](#) that the rules for the state's police are that deadly 'force is necessary immediately in order to proceed with the arrest and also that the person either committed a felony or is a threat'.

West and Pacific

This week, *National Journal* looks at the potential for Hollywood actor, Jeff Bridges (well known for his role as 'The Dude' in the film, *The Big Lebowski*) to become the Democrats' nominee for the Montana Senate. They [say](#) that with the end to Senator John Walsh campaign for a full Senate term in a cloud of plagiarism allegations, a Change.org petition has now been established to encourage Montana resident, Jeff Bridges to run. They say that Bridges' and his wife are Democratic donors, but that given that Bridges is not even registered to vote in Montana, a Senate campaign is unlikely.

Heading down to Idaho, on Monday, *The Spokesman-Review* [writes](#) that the state's economic performance has been falling in recent years on the heels of falling investment in education, according to a new report. They say that Idaho's per-capita income is lower than all but one state, and that it ranks 31 percent below the national average for tax collections.

In the Golden State this week, the California legislature approved a \$7.5 billion water bond to go on the ballot in November to address the state's serious drought. *Fox & Hounds* [writes](#) on Thursday that given that Republicans in the legislature voted to support the measure, they did not act, as many have accused them of being, as the 'party of no'. They say that while they did offer an alternative bond of \$11 billion, they compromised with Democratic lawmakers and the Governor Jerry Brown.

Politics in Hawaii got interesting this week, [reports](#) *The Atlantic* on Sunday, they write that the incumbent Governor, Neil Abercrombie, lost his Democratic primary election, the first time in History a Hawaii governor has lost renomination. They say the story is made more interesting by the Senate fight between incumbent Brian Schatz, who was picked by Abercrombie, and Representative Colleen Hanabusa, who was Senator Daniel Inouye's deathbed choice to be his replacement.

Finally, *The Mudflats* [writes](#) this week's on the extremes that GOP candidates in Alaska have gone to. They say that the state's Republican Senate primary has three candidates, all who want all abortions to be illegal, and only allowed if the mother and baby would otherwise die, or in cases of incest.

Featured image of Jeff Bridges – Credit: Gage Skidmore (Flickr, [CC-BY-SA-2.0](#))

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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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