

Astorino's 'Goldwater' tactics in New York, context-free politics in Wisconsin, and California's new laws: US state blog round up for 27 September – 3 October

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

Northeast

This week, *NHJournal* [writes](#) that incumbent Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen has launched a new focus on women's issues, charging that her GOP challenger, Scott Brown, does not stand up for women's reproductive rights and economic security. They say that Shaheen's move on women's issues is an effort to make her strong standing among women even stronger at a time when Brown may be gaining on her.

In the Bay State this week, *MassPoliticsProfs* looks at the state's gubernatorial race between Democrat Martha Coakley and Republican Charlie Baker. They look at whether or not national trends are 'hobbling' Coakley. They [say](#) that while President Obama is relatively unpopular, the Democratic Party out polls the GOP on most issues, and Coakley has a much superior voter mobilization operation. *Daily Kos* also [comments](#) on the race, writing on Monday that the contest is a 'real' one, given that many polls show Coakley neck and neck with Baker.

State of Politics [reports](#) that in the Empire State this week, GOP gubernatorial candidate, Rob Astorino is trying to 'Goldwater' incumbent Governor Andrew Cuomo, by producing an ad that asks if people want to reelect a governor who may end up in jail. Later in the week, they also look at the suggestion that New York Mayor, Bill de Blasio may have had a hand in the [demise](#) of a groundhog after he dropped one at a Groundhog Day ceremony February 2nd, which later died.

South

In the Old Dominion State this week, *Bearing Drift* [looks](#) at the Senate race between incumbent Democrat Mark Warner, and his GOP opponent, Ed Gillespie. They say that while Warner is heavily favored to retain his Senate seat, the race is still his to lose, especially if a Republican wave occurs nationally. Stating in Virginia, *Americablog* [writes](#) that the state's Republican Party could well suppress as much as 2 percent of the vote this November, as a new strict voter ID law will exclude nearly 100,000 people without a driver's licence. Considering that Virginia's gubernatorial contest was decided by just over 56,000 votes, this number could make all the difference.

Heading south to North Carolina, *The Daily Haymaker* [wonders](#) on Tuesday what the state is doing to protect itself from undocumented immigrants. They say that Mexican drug cartels have come to the Old North State to kidnap people, and that undocumented immigrants are 'hopping on' Medicaid rolls.

In South Carolina this week, *FitsNews* [reports](#) that Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Vincent Sheheen wants the Confederate flag that currently stands in the grounds of the state house removed. They say that the current Governor, Nikki Haley, wants the flag to remain, and that she has a ten point lead in election polling.

In the Sunshine State, *SaintPetersblog* [wonders](#) whether or not the 'worm has turned' for gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist. They say that a new poll gives Crist a six point lead in the Florida governor's race, potentially because he has raised almost as much money as his opponent, Rick Scott, and the local media have come to Crist's aid.

Moving over to Arkansas, on Sunday, the *Arkansas blog* [writes](#) that the Republican Senate candidate, Tom Cotton now supports a ballot initiative to raise the minimum wage. They say that Cotton's support for the measure (along

with that of GOP gubernatorial hopeful Asa Hutchinson) is opportunistic as he only came to support it after it was approved for the ballot after previously being opposed to increasing the minimum wage.

In the Pelican state this week, *Louisiana Voice* looks at what they call the 'nightmare of Bobbycare', referring to Governor Bobby Jindal's privatized of health insurance provider for the state's public employees. They say that since the benefit plan's privatization its \$500 million trust fund has largely been stolen, with the money to fund state worker's insurance running out in January. They say that state employees will be effectively uninsured if the changes to the scheme go through.

In Texas this week, *Brain and Eggs* says that if Greg Abbot is elected as the Lone Star state's governor this coming November, then the state will outlaw abortions, and may even start to prosecute women who have them.

Midwest

This week in Ohio, *Plunderbund* reports that this week New Jersey Governor (and Chairman of the Republican Governor's Association), Chris Christie, will be campaigning for incumbent Governor, John Kasich. They challenge Christie to name anything that Kasich's administration has done in Ohio that Christie should do in New Jersey, especially after Kasich has touted his 'JobsOhio' program.

Moving up to Michigan, *eclectablog* writes on the anti-women strategies of the state's Republican Party. They say that recordings obtained by the Michigan Democratic Party show that many in the GOP wish to make 'personhood (that life begins at fertilization) the law in Michigan, and that they also dismiss women's pay inequality as a 'misnomer'.

In Illinois this week, *Progress Illinois* reports that President Obama is headed to Chicago to fundraise for Governor Pat Quinn.

In the Badger State, *Uppity Wisconsin* says that the state's Governor, Scott Walker, is increasingly pushing an agenda of 'context-free politics', after one of his ads promoting a tax break for families was shown to be not fully truthful. They also say that Walker's tax cut claims need to be put in context of his earlier union-busting law which may have driven down consumer spending across the state by as much as \$3 billion.

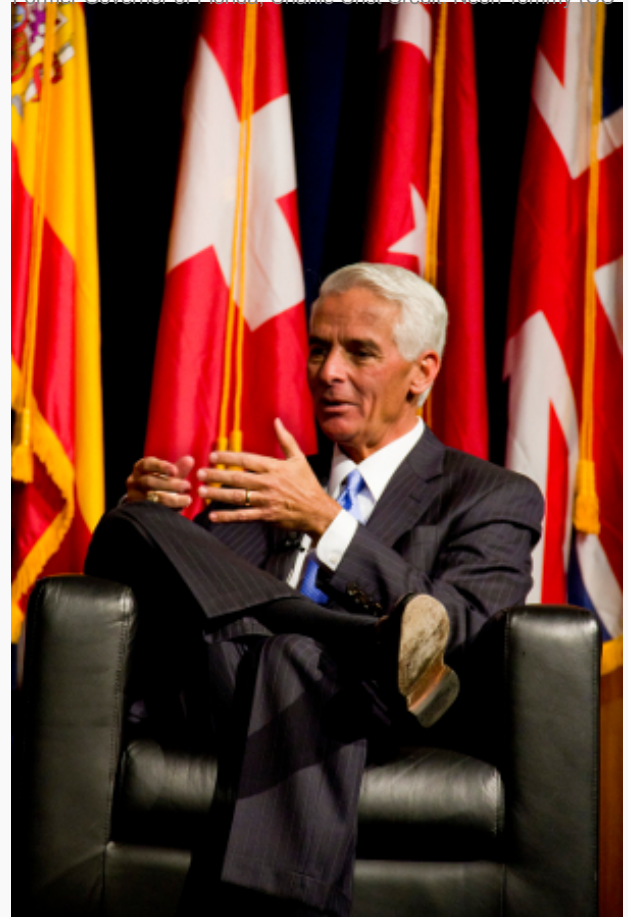
Heading west to Minnesota, on Saturday, *True North* wonders where the state's booming economy is after claims to that effect have been recently made by the state's Democratic Party. They say that in the past year, private sector jobs grew by a 'pathetic' 0.8 percent.

Meanwhile, in South Dakota, the *Madville Times* takes a look at the potential impacts of a ballot initiative to raise the state's minimum wage. They say that raising the minimum wage to \$8.50 will give 64,000 South Dakotans a raise of \$47 million in total, at the cost of only 357 jobs.

In neighboring North Dakota this week, *SayAnythingblog* looks at whether or not the state has too many elected offices. They say that the number of statewide offices that are elected, rather than appointed by the Governor is 'staggering'. They wonder if these elected positions truly result in better government, especially when many do not have at least two contenders in the elections.

On Wednesday, *Daily Kos* writes that the Republican Party in Kansas is sliding 'into disarray' after incumbent

Former Governor of Florida, Charlie Crist. Credit: Neon Tommy (CC-



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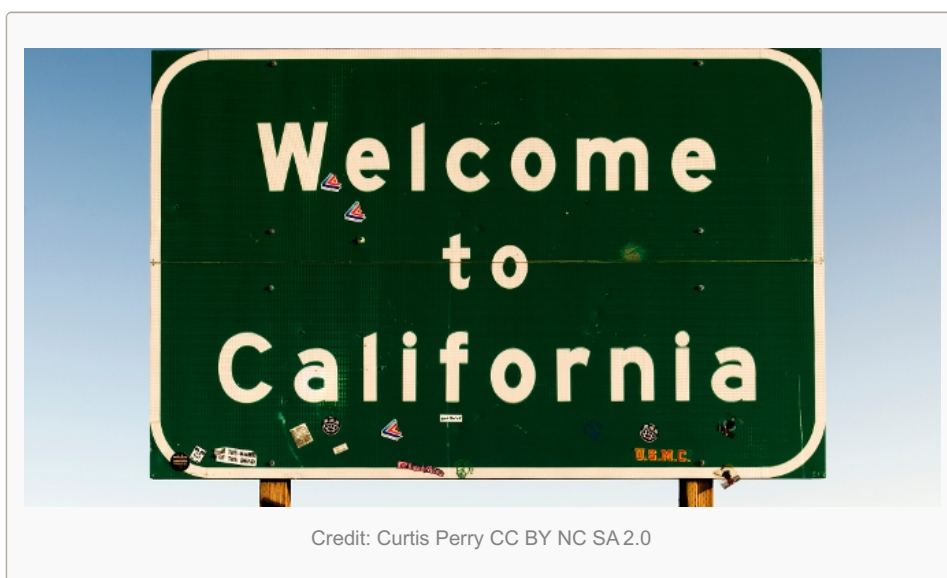
Senator Pat Roberts has taken a polling hit, with independent Greg Orman leading him 46 to 41 percent. The lead comes as a state district court ruled that Democrats do not need to name a new Senate candidate after Chad Taylor withdrew from the race in September.

West and Pacific

This week in Colorado, *The Spot* [reports](#) that incumbent Democratic Governor John Hickenlooper continues to raise 'big bucks' against his GOP challenger Bob Beauprez. They write that Hickenlooper now has \$4.5 million in his campaign coffers, compared with the \$1.2 million held by his rival.

Heading south to Arizona, the *Brennan Centre for Justice* [looks](#) at a recent dispute over how Congressional districts are redrawn every ten years. They write that the state legislature has sued Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission, arguing that redistricting commissions are unconstitutional and that only state legislatures can draw up congressional districts.

In California this week, *calitics* [reports](#) on bills recently signed by Democratic Governor, Jerry Brown. They say that starting next year, the Golden State will be the first in the U.S. to ban plastic bags (unless an industry group can get a referendum on the 2016 ballot to repeal the ban). They also say that Brown signed a bill that bans the use of 'gay panic' or 'trans panic' in defense of violent acts. *The Federalist* [looks](#) at another bill signed by Brown this week – a law that defines what counts as 'sexual



assault', something they say is 'neo-Victorian feminism', since consent must be affirmative and ongoing. Staying in California, *Daily Kos* [writes](#) that the state's Republican Party is in disarray given the amount of infighting that is occurring in this election season. They say that the current field of state-wide candidates are incapable of working together to create a coherent, unified vision for the state, with few endorsing each other.

On Thursday, *Roll Call's At the Races* looks at why it takes so long to count Alaska's votes during elections. They [say](#) that a combination of close contests and an increased emphasis on early voting are at fault; the latter of which has occurred because of the geographic challenges Alaska's topography for just getting votes to the capital, Juneau, which is only accessible by plane or boat.

Featured image: New York gubernatorial candidate, Rob Astorino Credit: [Michael Johnson](#) (Flickr, [CC-BY-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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